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TURN TO PAGE 88!

#006 MAR 1990 UK £1.95

AMIGA ACTION

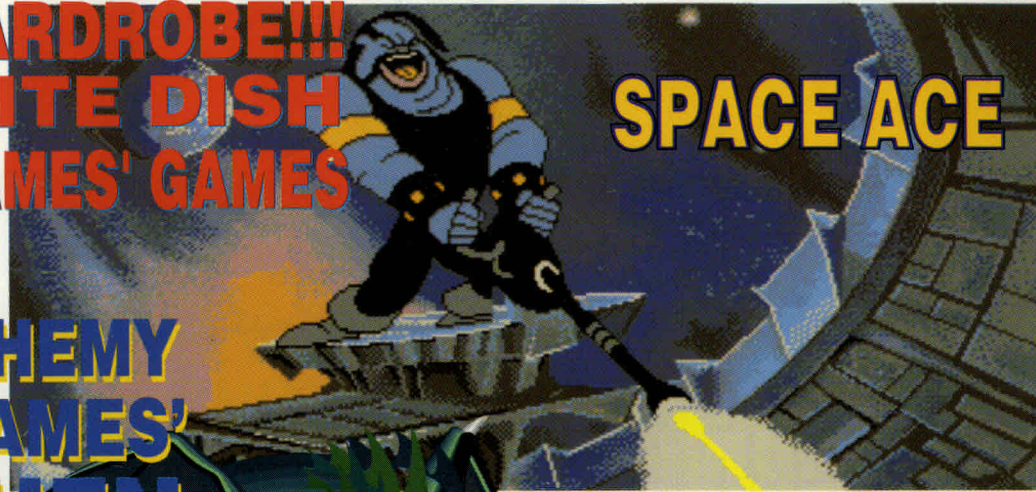
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100% ACTION!

★ **WIN: ...A WARDROBE!!!
A SATELLITE DISH
AND INFOGAMES' GAMES**

★ **AMIGA ALCHEMY
IN INFOGAMES'
DRAKKHEN**

SPACE ACE

**OPERATION
THUNDERBOLT**



BAD COMPANY



THE CYCLES



IRON LORD

TAKE THE LAW OWN

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W INTO YOUR HANDS

SIX INSPIRED

action sequences put you in control of Elliot Ness's elite squad of crime-busters.

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The Railway Station confrontation and Warehouse bust culminating in the thrilling denouement of a

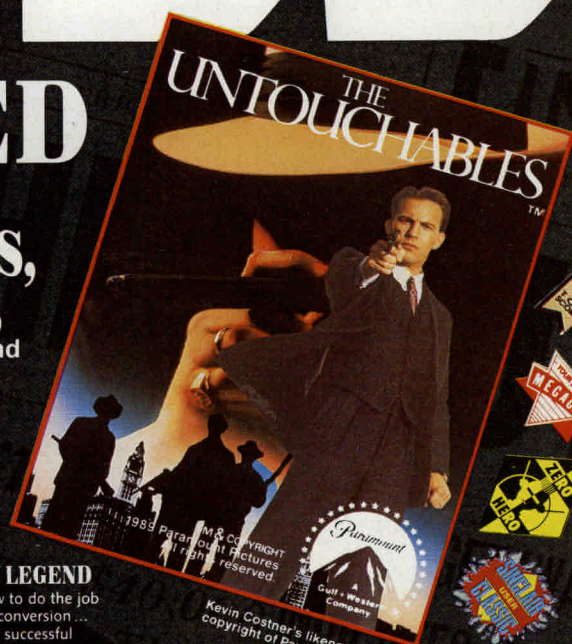
ROOFTOP DUEL

as you re-live the knife edge existence of Ness in his struggle against the retribution of Capone!

THE UNTOUCHABLES - LIVE AN AMERICAN LEGEND

"an absolute corker of a game... as smooth and polished as you can get, animation is top notch... a brilliant film conversion" Games Machine

"a fine example of how to do the job properly... a cracking conversion... easily one of the most successful licences to date" Sinclair User



Kevin Costner's likeness is the copyright of Paramount Pictures.

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NOW WITH TWICE THE ACTION, TWICE THE FUN, TWICE THE CHALLENGE

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or the bulletproof vest, but watch out for

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Operation Thunderbolt the incredible Taito coin-op conversion brought NOW to your home computer.



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A CRASH SMASH

TAITO

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CONT



DRAGON'S BREATH

Fresh from the success of Future Wars, Palace return with another innovative game. Written by a couple of ex-Bullfrog guys, it's a winner.

42



X-OUT

The shoot'em-up field is getting pretty competitive, but Rainbow Art's newbie will give them a run for their money.

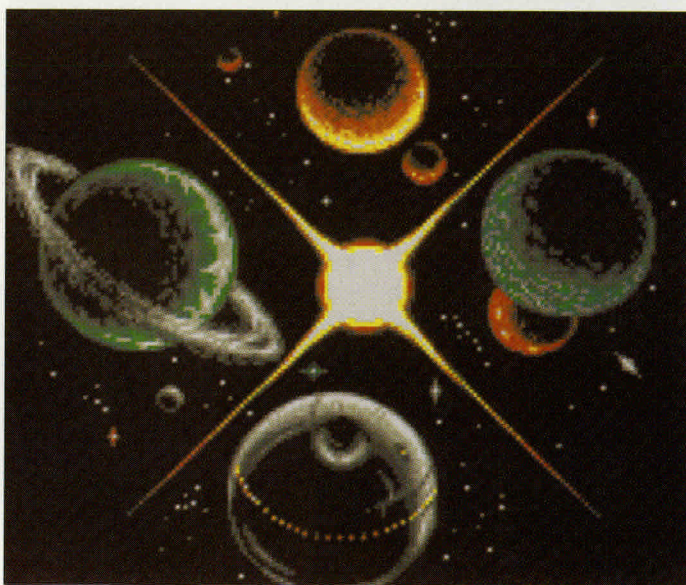
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DRAKKHEN

Infogrames' long-awaited D&D game can't really be categorised, but it is probably their best game yet.

60



BAD COMPANY

Steve Bak, that well known master of computer genocide, returns with another 'shoot first, ask questions later' game.

64



ENTS



OPERATION THUNDERBOLT

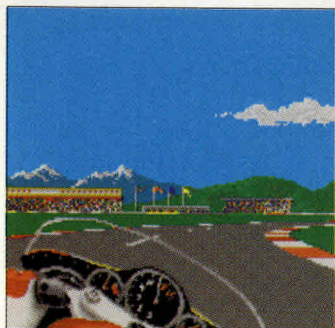
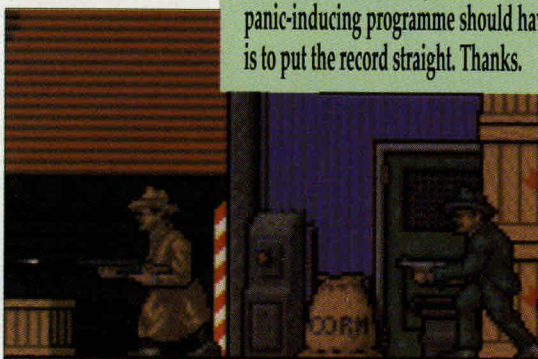
The sequel to last year's most violent game returns - with twice the guns and twice the devastation. The Amiga Action crew flex their trigger fingers and enter battle.

70

THE UNTOUCHABLES

Ocean return to the movie tie-in field with a conversion of the film that won Sean Connery an Oscar. With seven different stages, it offers considerable variety - but how will it play?

32



THE CYCLES

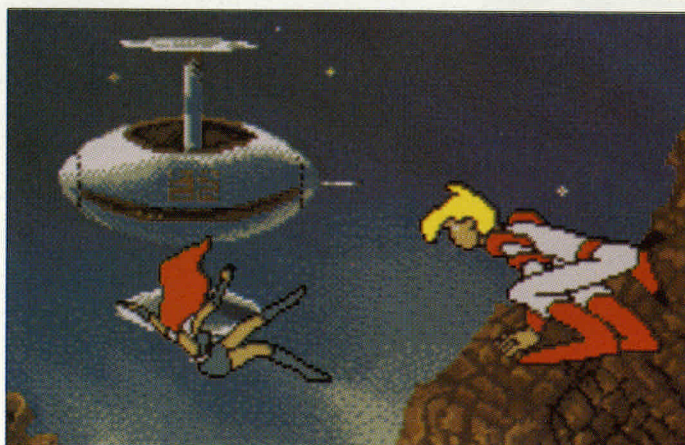
Accolade follow-up Grand Prix Circuit with more of the same, only with two wheels instead of four.

74

SPACE ACE

There's no doubting that the Readysoft games are innovative - but Dragon's Lair didn't play particularly well. Will Space Ace remedy this?

36



QED: FACT OR FICTION?

I don't suppose you happened to see the edition of BBC TV's QED programme that dealt with cases of people addicted to using computers? It mentioned cases of kids and adults alike, who were so fascinated by their home micros that they - shock, horror - often spent hours at a time playing on them. It also then went on to talk about a kid who was addicted to using his Nintendo, and asked lots of punters at the PC Show what their favourite type of computer game was. Not surprisingly, violent games were mentioned, and they then went on to say that this is disturbing. Why? OK, there ARE examples of people who become addicted to using computers - but these cases are very rare. What the programme seemed to do was warn parents that ANYONE who uses a computer is in danger, and this is complete rubbish. Games are games. No more than that, and they are there to be enjoyed - and if violent games are the most popular, so be it. It doesn't mean that someone who plays Strider for long hours is going to go out and cause havoc. I wonder how many parents looked at their children after the programme and wondered if they were addicted? This kind of panic-inducing programme should have had views from both sides, but it didn't. This is to put the record straight. Thanks.

**WIN!
WIN!
WIN!**

Lots and lots of different things! First of all, you can win a SKY dish courtesy of Ocean, then you can win a huge selection of Infogrames, and, finally, there is a massive collection of hats, T-shirts and the like up for grabs.

27

SNIPPETS

At last, it's nearly here. Prepare to do some serious rainbowing when Rainbow Islands is (hopefully) released next month.



RAINBOW ISLANDS AT LAST

After a lot of speculation, it now seems that Ocean will be releasing Graftgold's superb conversion of Rainbow Islands. Speaking to programmer Andrew Braybrook, he said that things were finally on the move, and that it seemed very likely that the conversion of the Taito coin-op will be released by the Mancurian soft co. This isn't particularly surprising, bearing in mind Ocean's links with Taito in the past, but if all goes smoothly, you may be seeing the long-awaited arrival of Graftgold's masterpiece (which gained the Amiga Action award in the first issue) some time in March. Let's hope so.

MORE FROM NEW-LINE

Norwegian newcomers, New-Line, who failed to impress us with their first release, Aladdin's Magic Lamp, are set to release Wonderland, a cutesy platform game. The story centres around a rotund little dwarf, who you must take across several screens of deadly tea-pots, turtles and flowers, as you attempt to clear your land of the mutants. The graphics look extremely good, with the main character featuring some nice touches, and the backdrops and enemy are of a similar standard. Expect a review next month, to determine whether it plays as well as it looks.



Colourful graphics are a key part to Wonderland - but how will it play? Stay tuned!

UBI SOFT GET UNREAL

UBI Soft's next release is Unreal, a strange platform game which involves saving a newly-formed planet from destruction. Apparently, an awesome god, known only as The Sleeper, wakes up every few years, and sends a messenger out with beautiful eggs which contain the four properties needed to create a world. Unfortunately, whilst on his way to give life to the planet Unreal, The Sleeper's messenger was hit by a stray comet, and the eggs were shattered, creating havoc on the planet Unreal as the elements fought against each other. After the planet's surface settled, two new warriors claimed the planet for themselves: but little did they know, that one egg survived, and from this egg came Isolda and Targan - two people who were destined to save Unreal from itself. However, time passed, and one day one of the evil rulers kidnapped Isolda. So, recruiting the help of a dragon-friend, Targan set out to destroy the four eggs that had created the turmoil.

From that strange scenario, we then enter a massive arcade-adventure in which you traverse the colourful landscape and look for the eggs. Many of the devilish creatures that inhabit Unreal will attack you but, thankfully, you can protect yourself with whatever weapons you are carrying. From what we have seen in a rolling demo, the gameplay seems to be very similar to that of Psygnosis' Shadow of the Beast, with the nicely animated main sprite

running and slashing his way through the hordes of varied and deadly mutated creatures as he runs past the attractive backdrops, but let's hope it's a bit more involving. Featuring UBI

Soft's typically high-quality graphics and, hopefully, gameplay to match, Unreal will be released sometime in January.



Unleashing a bolt of fire at an enemy, Targan makes his way through the snowy landscape to reach one of the eggs.



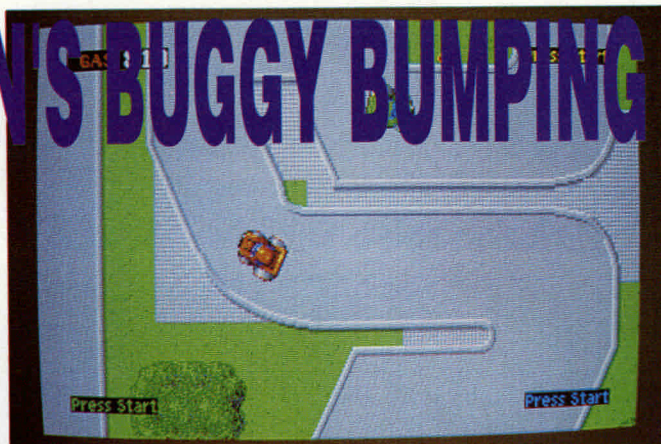
(Above & below) Armed with a firesword, our manly hero runs through the creepy forest - only to fall into a nearby stream. That'll teach him to look before he leaps!



ACTIVISION'S BUGGY BUMPING

Set for a January release is Hot Rod, a Super Sprint-style car-racing game set over thirty tracks. Up to four players can take part in the game, and the idea is to whizz around the many circuits, avoiding deadly obstacles, such as construction work, and make enough money to buy enhancements for your vehicles. In addition, the races are played without permission, and another hazard appears in the form of the boys in blue who will be only too happy to knock you out of the race.

Weather conditions, also, will play a big part in the race, and your car will be sent spinning or sliding as you attempt to get to grips with sub-arctic conditions



The Bulmer and Costello show hits the road once more, this time safely within the confines of Activision's Hot Rod.

and pouring rain. However, by making the right selection of parts in the aforementioned Halfords, you will be able to combat the atrocious conditions by adding chains to your tyres and items such as new engines

and bumpers. Hot Rod is being programmed by Richard Costello, with graphics added by Kevin 'Galaxy Force' Bulmer, and they are the team who converted Gauntlet all those years ago.



With the yellow car just in the lead, the two trailing vehicles wish they had bought better equipment at the last shop.

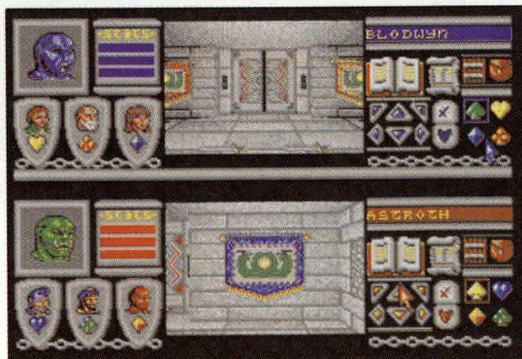
BLOODWYCH RETURNS

Fans of Mirrorsoft's smash-hit RPG, Bloodwych, may be interested to hear that the first of

a set of data disks is now available. The story continues on from the end of the first

Bloodwych, with your party returning home from their mission. However, instead of actually killing the evil Lord of Entropy, you merely banished him to another world, where he has become all-powerful. Now, he wants his revenge and has summoned you to his new home to finish you once and for all. Aside from the scenario and new graphics, will encounter new monsters, spells, and puzzles, and there are over twenty-five new levels to explore. It's out now, and expect new data disks and scenarios to follow soon.

The Lord of Entropy has summoned you - will you finish him off properly now, or will he return in a second data disk?



SNIPPETS

DOMARK'S INCENTIVE

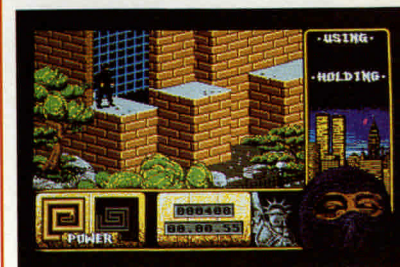
Fans of Incentive's novel Freescape games will be pleased to hear that they are about to release a new one. Called Castle Master, your quest is to rescue a beautiful princess from each of a large castle's towers. In addition, though, you must also destroy any of the evil creatures that attack you, so there are effectively two games in one. The game will be released in April through Domark rather than Microprose, and according to our source, it is supposed to be the best Freescape game yet.



The Doms with the Incentive guys at the signing of the Castle Master deal.

WHATEVER HAPPENED TO?

If you were reading the first issue of Amiga Action, you may have noticed a game called Last Ninja II being mentioned in Real Soon Now, as well as the perpetual promise 'expect a review next month'. 'Well,' you may be asking, 'six issues later, and there still isn't a sign of System 3's arcade/adventure/beat'em-up.' Well, due to various programming problems, the game's release date has been put off somewhat. Still, if all goes according to plan, you can expect the game, and its sequel, to be released sometime in the autumn.



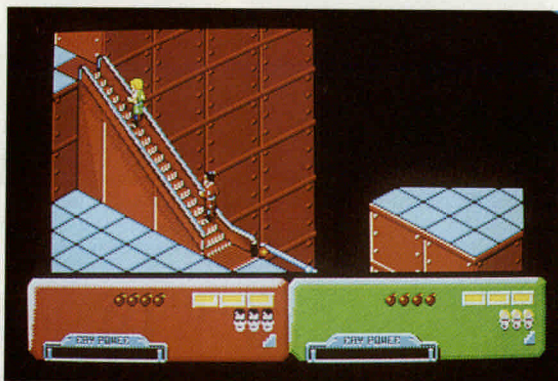
THE LAST OF THE SUPER HEROES

Forget Superman! Who needs Batman? After all, after a brief excursion on the ST, Typhoon Thompson, the world's most unlikely superhero is about to hit the Amiga. Released almost a year ago on the ST, Typhoon's adventures had him scooting around a smooth-scrolling play area in an attempt to rescue a baby from the clutches of some evil sea-sprites. Armed only with a small powered dinghy, and a handful of weapons, our little hero must complete a number of tests, and gain better weapons, before he can rescue the kidnapped toddler. At first, it didn't seem likely that Typhoon Thompson was going to appear on our beloved machine but, luckily, those nice guys at Broderbund decided to convert it. Whether or not it features any enhancements over the ST version is not known, though.



Typhoon Thompson, all-round hero and general good guy, is equipped for his second mission by the Lords of the Sea.

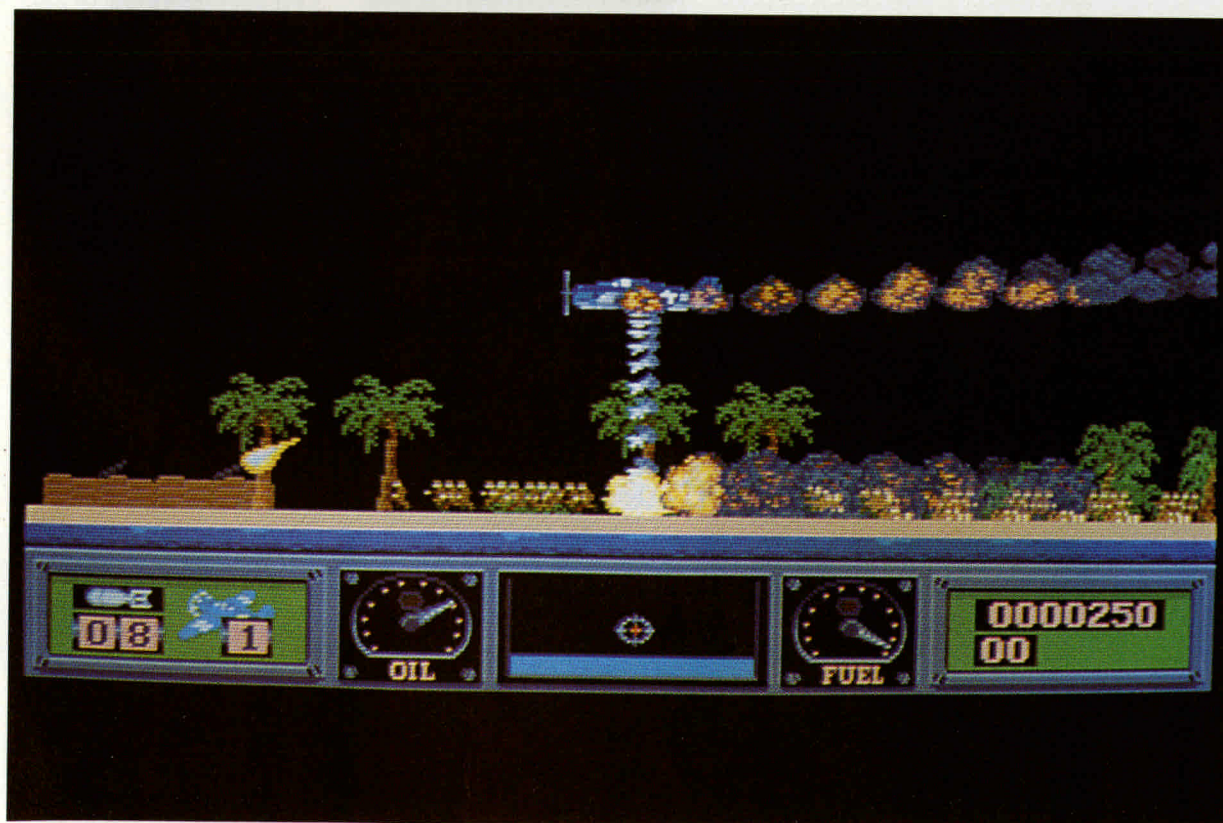
It's here - well, nearly! Escape From the Planet of the Robot Monsters is nearly complete and will, hopefully, be reviewed next month.



Also coming from Broderbund via Domark, is Wings of Fury, a horizontally-

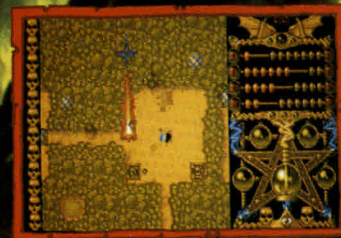
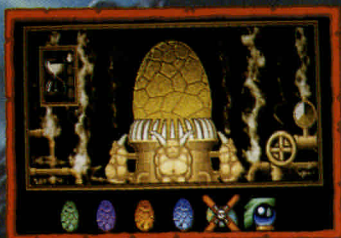
scrolling shoot'em-up in the vein of Choplifter. The game is set in 1944, and you have been sent to provide protection for the severely crippled warship, USS Wasp. With bombs, missiles and guns, you must fly along the coastline and inland, bombing and shooting the enemy installations. However, the enemy aren't going to take this sitting down, and send out large groups of bullet-firing planes. All in all, there are seven stages to battle your way through, and a strategic element which has you equipping your ship from a large armoury. In addition, depth is

added to the gameplay by the need to refuel, and this makes the action just that little more nail-biting. Expect both Typhoon Thompson and Wings of Fury in January, priced at 19.99 each. Finally, work is nearly finished on Escape From The Planet of the Robot Monsters (phew!) is nearly complete, so check out next month's mag where we will hopefully have a review and you'll be able to see whether Domark will have the same success with this conversion as they did with their past coin-op licences, such as Hard Drivin' and Toobin'.



Choplifter-style antics in Wings Of Fury, and your Hellicat enters battle with the inland's considerable defences.

DRAGONS BREATH



Immortality. Legend has it that the secret is hidden in the Throne Room of the Great Castle atop Dwarf Mountain at the centre of the land of Anrea.

Breed a fighting force of dragons and conquer the villages of Anrea. Collect taxes and buy magic ingredients from passing traders to cast spells. Finally, complete the Talisman that guides you to your ultimate goal.

Dragons Breath. A Fantasy Strategy game for up to three people.

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SNIPPETS

OCEAN SPECULATION

Mancurian software house, Ocean, are set to unleash a whole host of new titles for the nineties. No details are confirmed yet, but as well as the movie tie-in of Clive Barker's monster movie, Nightbreed, you can expect Robocop II. The film is only at script stage at the moment, but it is believed that Ocean are writing the game based on this.

Another release expected after that is F-29 II, the sequel to Ocean's much-touted flight sim (which we still haven't been sent for review - come on Ocean!). The game is expected to take up from where the first Retaliator left off, but with exciting new missions and the like, but details are sketchy.

Finally, Cabal arrived in the office just too late for this issue, but there will be a full review next month.



Just too late for this issue, Ocean France's conversion of Cabal is in for review.

DUNE

It's speculation time again! Rumour has it that Virgin/Mastertronic will be releasing a computer game based on Frank Herbert's epic book, Dune. Not a lot is known, but the book lends itself to the adventure format. The book revolves around a rare and valuable fuel called Spice, and the witch-like inhabitants of the planet Spice is found on. Until more news is known, we'll keep you posted, but it we doubt if it'll be out until next Christmas.

THE NAME IS BOND....

With a string of Bond games behind them, including the successful Licence to Kill, Domark are set to release another one. Based on the old Roger Moore Bond film, The Spy Who Loved Me. Little is known of the game at the moment, but expect an update soon.

EA'S STRATEGY FOR 2020

Coming soon from Electronic Arts is Imperium, a complex strategy game set in the distant year of 2020. The game positions you as the last remaining Emperor of the known

galaxy, and you are responsible for your followers' progress over the following years. This includes guiding them through the troubles of economy, politics and war, whilst making sure that

they prosper, too. The game is written by Matthew Stibbe, a guy who has been into computer wargames for quite a while, and the graphics are supplied by Karl Cropley who was responsible for the graphics in EA's superb Hound of the Shadow. Not a lot else is known at present, but it is due for release in March, for the grand old price of £24.99.

Meanwhile, EA are also pretty chuffed to announce that they did rather well at the In Din (an industry do, where all us people within the software industry go to London dressed in silly suits and get incredibly pie-eyed - oh, they give out a few awards, too!). Populous was given an award, and Commodore also gave them an award for DPaint III. Other winners were Ocean, who pretty much scooped the lot, and Anco who won best game with their superb kick-around, Kick Off - hear, hear, say we!



Stupid Publicity Shots of 1990. (Number 1 in a series of 500): Nick Wilson (left) and Matthew Stibbe (right), the guys behind Imperium, dress up and wonder what the relevance is to their God-like game. Is it because we look at them and say 'Oh, God, look at them...'

RELIVE HISTORY WITH U.S. GOLD

Mentioned briefly after the PC Show, we can expect Lucasfilm's follow-up to the successful Battlehawks 1942 any day now. Called the Battle of Britain and - nothing surprising here - based on the battle that John Mills made so many films about, it is expected to take all of the features that made Battlehawks so popular and add to them. You can choose to be on the side of either country as you take on various missions of death and destruction against



Relive more moments from the famous battle as you show off your antics.

the enemy. The game features cockpit detail actually researched from the real planes used in the famous Worlds War II battle, and you will be able to take part in full-blown battles from the war. In addition,

once a mission has been successfully completed, you can replay your glorious feats and bore your friends and family to tears! Battle of Britain will be released next month, for the price of £24.99.

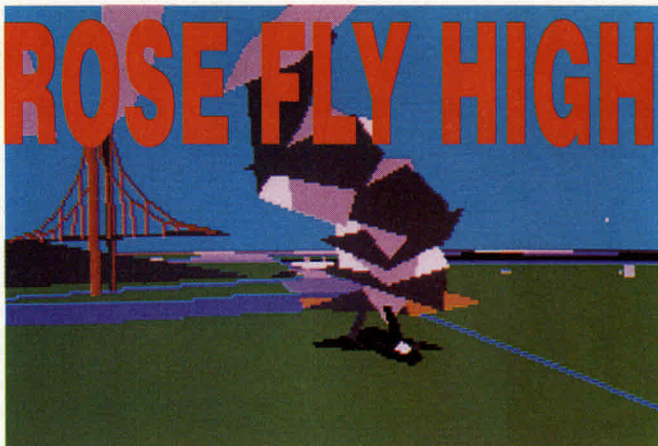
With two German planes heading towards you, guns blazing, it is going to take some accurate shooting to save your bacon - what-ho, Algy, checks away!



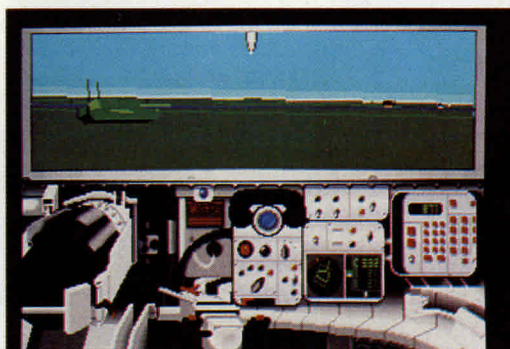
MICROPROSE FLY HIGH

Never ones to stay out of the picture long, Microprose are set to release three new sims on the Amiga. The first we have news on, M1 Tank Platoon, a detailed tank sim which has gone down a bundle with PC owners. Seated within an expensive tank, you are given a wide range of missions to conquer and, as can be expected in a Microprose sim, there are many option screens to help you in your task. Extra weapons and facilities can be added to your tank, and you can also determine the difficulty of your mission by changing various parameters, a la Gunship. Likewise, with each mission that you successfully accomplish, you will climb steadily up through the ranks. The game has been in development for quite a while now, but it seems that M1 Tank Platoon will finally trundle on to our beloved machines sometime in April.

Next, we have F-15 Strike Eagle II - the long-awaited sequel to Microprose's aging dogfight. Featuring more detailed graphics and smoother update than its, admittedly ancient, predecessor, F-15 II once again sets you the task of taking the controls of an F-15 and blowing nine barrels out of the enemy. A number of offensive situations are offered to the player, and the reward for a successful mission is the glory and a medal, enticing you to bomb the enemy just one more time. Like M1 Tank Platoon, F-15



Gottim! As the computer pans around the futuristic Stealth Fighter, it blows up an enemy installation and prepares to repeat the procedure on the bridge.

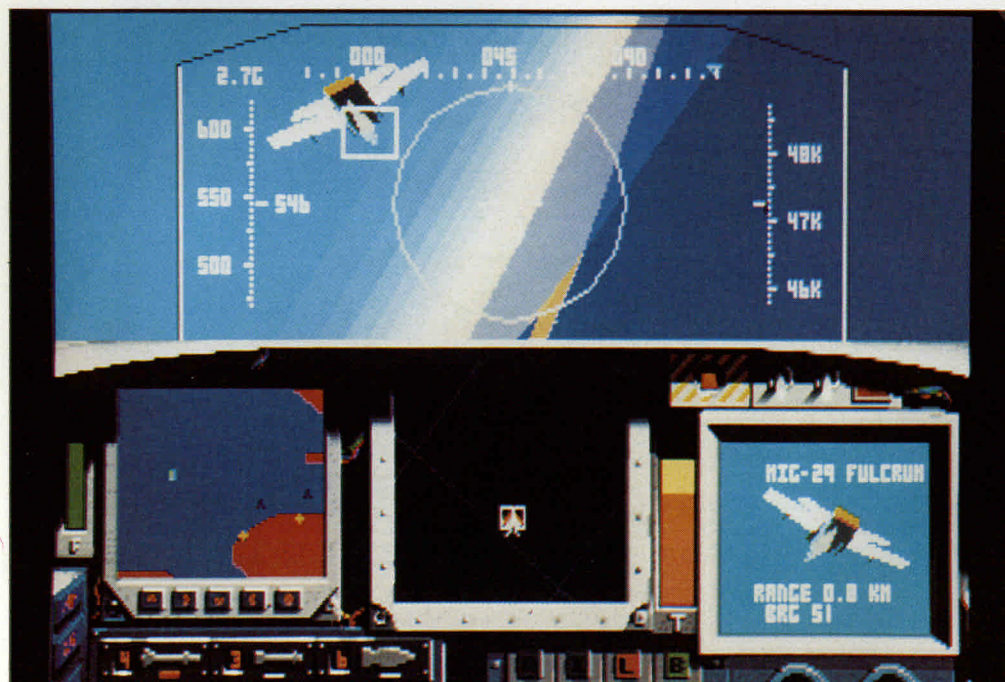


Looking through the view-port in your battle tank, you spot a tank approaching from the left - is it friend or foe? Find out soon, in Microprose's M1 Tank Platoon.

is choc-a-bloc with useful parameters, but will be available some time after the tank game - perhaps in June.

Finally, we have the game oh-so-many 16-bit owners have been waiting for - Project: Stealth Fighter. At the time the game was released on the C64 a couple of years ago, apparently the game caused quite a stir, as the plane developers wondered how Microprose's American programmers could have got quite so accurate in its weapons and facilities! Now, it is our turn

to savour the delights of the super-plane, as we take it on various strike missions and use its computer-designed facilities to the full. Apart from the usual missiles and the like, you have access to a wide range of futuristic features, and these will prove essential in your battles. Again, Stealth is still some way from completion, but so far it is looking very good indeed, with the 3D graphics moving both smoothly and rapidly. Expect it in the autumn. All the games will be priced at £24.95.



Bearing down on an enemy plane with your missiles locked and ready to go in F-15 Strike Eagle II.

SNIPPETS

Electronic world-saving in Accolade's Day of the Viper.



SNAKES ALIVE WITH ACCOLADE

New from Accolade is The Third Courier, a spying game in which you have been ordered to recover some stolen NATO documents from the clutches of some villainous Russians. There are many people with whom you can interact, and the journey to the plans is fraught with danger and double-crossing. It'll be out in October at the price of 24.99. Also from Accolade, expect to see Day of the Viper very soon. Already out on the ST, this game of computer-controlled exploration sees you infiltrating the defences of a massive enemy fleet and disabling it. Strategic thinking is needed to survive, and the price of espionage will be, again, £24.99.



Become a would-be George Smiley in The Third Courier.

SPACE HARRIER RETURNS AGAIN!

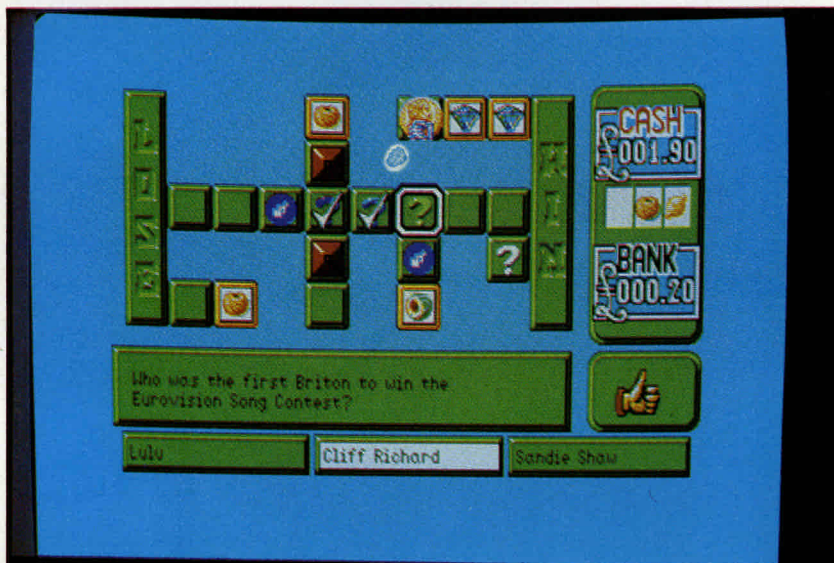
If you are the proud owner of Elite's Space Harrier, you'll no doubt be pleased to hear that Elite are releasing a new compilation which features all twenty stages of the coin-op. The compilation should be in the shops for sometime in April, and I bet that'll please Grandslam no end!

EEEEEEEEEEH, I KNOW IT, I KNOW IT!



If you don't know which program 'Little Willy' appears in, you must be daft - it's Grange Hill, isn't it?

Fed up standing in pubs, while your mates press all the wrong buttons when they 'know' the answer? Well, Audiogenic bring all the thrills and spills of those arcade trivia machines home in what looks to be a very close copy.



After being announced ages ago, both of Audiogenic's Emlyn Hughes games are almost ready for release. The first of the two games is an Amiga version of the smash-hit, 8-bit title, Emlyn's International Soccer, in which you must guide your team to victory against a number of teams. The game boasts a viewpoint akin to the one used in Microdeal's soccer, and you control the fully-controllable members of your team as they dribble, head and kick the ball into the back of the opponents' net. On the 64, the game was praised for its neat control system and range of options, and these features have been

kept in the Amiga version and added to. Whether it will be better than the Ed's all-time fave, Kick Off, remains to be seen, but we should find out next month.

After that, the next Emlyn game will be a trivia game. Sports trivia games in the past have never really been that successful, but Emlyn's is reckoned to be just that little bit different. The game style is based on those trivia machines that you find in pubs, and you have to answer questions correctly to beat a path of answers through a wall of questions. When you reach the other side, you will then go on to a harder set of questions. Pop music, sport and entertainment are amongst the subjects set to test your knowledge, and bonuses can be collected by answering questions in a special sequence. Other features, including icons which allow you to skip questions, are also present, and these make your task easier. They'll both be out sometime in March.

Finally, for anyone who is waiting for the Audiogenic's computer game based on the Lone Wolf series of role-playing books, there's bad news. Due to programming set backs, the game has been scrapped, but will hopefully see the light against sometime in the summer. It'll still be a hack'n'slay game, though.

STARBYTE'S MEDUSA

From the people who bought you Clown-o-mania, comes Rings of Medusa, a strategy/trading set in a mythical kingdom. As the young son of a deposed king, you have been given the challenge of restoring the balance between good and evil - a balance that has been swayed by the arrival of the evil goddess of the underworld, Medusa. Medusa, she of the of the snake-like hair and the face that is so ugly that it turns anyone who sees it to stone) is planning to raise an army, and, using the many evil beings that inhabit the underworld, she is set to take over your world. However, one thing can stop Medusa's advances, and that is a chain comprised of five rings. Once collected, the chain will then give you enough magic power to defeat Medusa and foil



The party enters a village and prepares their next move.

her evil plans for domination. You start off in your small kingdom, and must explore a map of the area, enhancing what powers you have and becoming proficient in the use of weapons. In addition, money is needed, so

trading, bartering and even looting is necessary for your cause. The action is depicted from a series of map and menu screens, and it is from these that your route and plans are chosen. You cannot afford to waste your

time, though, as Medusa and her cronies are growing in strength and power all the time. Completed on the ST, the Amiga version will be released shortly at the price of 29.95. Expect a review next month.



TAITO

RAINBOW ISLANDS



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Out For a Duck

Could you please tell me if there is a cricket program available for the Amiga. I know of a game called Championship Cricket on the ST, but don't know if it was ever converted to the Amiga. Can you help? And if it does exist, where can I get hold of one?

J. Hogan, Tyne & Wear.

AA: As far as I know, I'm afraid that the Amiga is currently cricketless. There were plans to convert the aforementioned Championship Cricket over, but they never came to fruition.

STE a Threat?

I have bought the last four issues of your mag, and think it's brill. I think the idea of a games mag solely for the Amiga is great. Right, now for my question and a plea:

1. Is the new STE really better than our beloved Amiga. Can it be that Atari have come up with a machine that is better for games than the Amiga - including in the graphic and sound areas?

2. Is there any way in which you could squeeze in a tiny review of Dragon Ninja, because I would like to buy it but don't know if it is worth it.

Ahmed Maasarani, London.

AA: Personally, I don't see the STE as a threat. It is basically what the ST should have been in the first place, and I think that there will be a few problems with compatability and the like. Don't worry about any computers coming out, though, the Amiga can match them, if not better them, in nine cases out of ten.

As for Dragon Ninja, it features everything from the coin-op, and the graphics are practically identical, but the scrolling is jerky, and the gameplay repetitive. Sonically, it isn't too bad, but unless you are an ardent fan of the coin-op I don't think it is a worthwhile buy. I'd give it 56%.

A Sound Point Of View

Being an avid reader of your mag, I thought I'd write in concerning the topic of computer soundtracks which I love. I recently upgraded to the Amiga from the good old 64, and the one thing I want to do is record soundtracks, like they do in the arcades, on to cassettes without any background noise. I've tried the basic method of recording straight

from the TV speaker, but there's too much interference. Do you know of any other ways? Or, even better, do you know if it is possible to get hold of just the games' music? Please don't say PD, though, as I hate it.

I favour computer music to pop music and that's why I think that software companies should produce audio soundtracks of their games, and distribute them through some sort of library. Here is a list of my favourite computer music:

1. LED Storm (64).
2. BMX Kidz (64).
3. Xenon II (Amiga).
4. Cybernoid I & II (64).
5. Populous (Amiga).
6. Nemesis The Warlock (64).

The only problem is that, to get to listen to the music, I have to buy the games, and they often aren't worth the money. So come on Ocean, U.S. Gold and Activision, get recording!

P.S. Bring back Rob Hubbard, he's too good to be in America!

David Thorne, Liverpool.

AA: I can't say that I prefer computer music to the 'real' stuff, but I agree with you when you say that some of it is really good, especially the Xenon II stuff. As for recording it, I have drawn a blank on that, I'm afraid, but I've kept your address and will look into it. Finally, apart from the PD scene, I don't think you're going to have a lot of luck getting the music on its own - but a few companies are looking into audio cassettes to bundle with the games. Mind you, when ZZap64!! gave away an audio cassette with Rob Hubbard's Sanxion music on it, hundreds of people rang up complaining that it wouldn't load!

A Newcomer Writes

Just over a month ago, I decided to upgrade my trusty 64 to a 16-bit computer. Knowing nothing about the ST or Amiga, I thought that I should check out a few mags. After seeing the dazzling colour of Amiga Action (the second issue), I bought it to investigate the Amiga deeper. After closer inspection, I knew the Amiga was for me, so I went out and bought the Amiga Batpack, along with Bloodwych, The Games: Summer Edition, and RVF Honda. So, what can I say apart from thanks for showing me what a 16-bit computer is all about.

Eager to buy issue three, which was still three weeks away, I tried to obtain issue one, but my

newsagent couldn't get hold of it, so can you tell me where I can get one from? Also, I bought Powerdrift and Stunt Car Racer the other day, and I hope that they both get the credit they deserve. Finally, a few questions:

1. Can I get Bubble Bobble and Spy V Spy for the Amiga?
2. Is there a good wrestling game available?
3. What does F.O.F.T. stand for?

A. Nonymouse, No Fixed Abode.

AA: Thanks for your kind words, it's all part of the service. Right, answering your questions:

1. Bubble Bobble is about, but it can prove quite hard to get hold of. Try a reputable mail order place, or try contacting Firebird on 0666 504326. As for the first Spy V Spy game; no, it's not available, but it might arrive soon via Wicked Software who released its two sequels.

2. Nope, unfortunately, there isn't a wrestling game on the Amiga at all - a pity, really.

3. Federation Of Free Traders.

Piracy Overseas

While on holiday in Portugal, we stayed in Porto and visited a shopping centre called Dallas. As we went in, there was a computer shop, so I went inside and looked at their games. They were all priced at six pounds, and I was going to buy a game when someone else went up to the counter and requested a title. The shopkeeper put a disk called X-Copy in the drive, and then, to my amazement, proceeded to copy the game. Surely this can't be legal, where they can allow a shop to copy and sell games. There were a couple of other shops that did this, too - why?

P.S. When is Emlyn Hughe's International Soccer coming out?

David Simdes, Berks.

AA: No, you're right, it is illegal, but in countries such as Spain and Portugal, the copyright laws are practically non-existent, and very little is done to stop piracy. It is, unfortunately, a commonplace activity for software shops to follow the actions you describe, but, hopefully, the laws will be tightened soon, and this will put a stop to it. Finally, Emlyn will be with us in the new year.

Erik The Viking Writes

I'm a Norwegian Viking trying to keep up with the World, and that is not easy for a beginner who has only recently bought an Amiga because he

loves video games and had money to burn. Still, it was well worth the money - it's superb. My main point, though, is a small request to game producers: please include instructions in either Norwegian or in Swedish, as my dictionary is getting worn out. After all, you have translations in German, Spanish, Hindu and so on, so why not try Scandinavian. Is the market here too small, or do you consider Scandinavians great at the English language (actually, that's pretty close to the truth!)? My last point concerns your reviews. They are nicely done, and I like the three comments, but watch out for inflation in the ratings! If I was a reviewer, I would try to create a big difference between a good game and a very good game. After all, it's superb games we all want. I feel that if everyone was a little bit more strict with their marking systems, the game designers would do their utmost to create games that would score exceptionally well.

Age Mossestad, Hoyanger.

AA: I don't know why software houses don't print instructions in Norwegian, probably because people who live in Timbuktu or Zaire would then want instructions in their manuals, too - resulting in an instruction sheet the size of War and Peace! Until this happens, though, I'm afraid that you will have to invest in another, less beaten-up, dictionary. On your second point, AA has always agreed that some mags overrate game, and that's why a good game can score in the seventies to the eighties, allowing for the really good stuff to enter the nineties - as seen last month with the superb It Came From The Desert.

Getting Down To Basics

I get your wonderful mag delivered every month, and I really enjoy reading it - apart from one point: there's nothing about Basic in it. I only recently invested in an Amiga, but would like to get into Basic. Will you be doing anything about it?

Mark Dickinson, Dunbartonshire.

AA: I'm afraid not. The nearest we are going to get to programming is the odd poke. Sorry.

Cheating Cheaters

When reading through your magazines, I have found several cheat modes which I seem to recall. And when I flick through other mags, I find the same cheat modes - fine, you may

think, but the cheats are sent in by different people. For instance, you had a cheat mode for Vigilante sent in by one guy, while another mag had one sent in by someone else! I realise there isn't a lot you can do about this, but can you put across the fact that someone spent hours trying to find the cheat, only to have someone else copy it and take all the credit.

Ben Bartlett, Baintree.

AA: We receive a lot of cheats each month, and, as much as possible, we try to print ones that haven't been published before. Vigilante was an example of that, as was Dragon's Lair last month, but we will try harder. Meanwhile, if you do have any original tips or cheats, don't forget send them into Doug, and he'll dish out prizes for the best ones.

Giving It Some Stick

I have recently changed from a Sega System to an Amiga 500. One of my favourite games on the Sega was R-Type, therefore I purchased it for the Amiga. On playing it, the controls were the same except one thing: in the manual it states that to release the force, you must press the space bar. Having kept the Sega control pad to use with the Amiga, I found that, upon pressing the second firebutton, the force was released, as in the Master version, allowing you to leave your hands on the joystick. Why was this not stated in the instruction leaflet?

Also, why can't games make use of the second firebutton? It helps tremendously in the ease of playing games. For instance, would not the controls be a lot simpler in many games if the stick could be controlled with up, down, left, right, and the firebuttons to jump and fire respectively? What do you think?

Peter York, Bilston.

AA: I own a Sega and, to tell you the truth, I can't stand the control pads. I have tried repeatedly to get on with them, but they don't move that much and didn't seem too responsive. Having said that, I think that whether a second firebutton should be used separately is all down to opinion. Personally, I think it could get a tad confusing, and a lot of people would end up jumping instead of firing, and other button-related confusions. As well as this, when you consider that joysticks, such as the Comp Pros, have a firebutton either side of the actual stick, it could get very tricky activating both buttons.

Basically, keep using your Sega pad and - who knows? - perhaps your ideal controller will come along. Finally, the reason Activision didn't mention about the Sega pad's second button releasing the orb is because they probably didn't think to try it with the said controller as perhaps you are in the minority of people who use a pad with their Amiga.

Mini-reviews?

As a family, we recently bought an Amiga 500, and, having been impressed enough to subscribe to your mag, we thought we might try a cry for help. We have two sons, both of whom are computer-mad, and who love the games that we have bought them so far. Our funds are strictly limited, though, and we would like to take advantage of some of the temptingly-priced older games that are on offer from mail order houses, but we have no way of determining their quality. Any chance of AA giving a brief (ie. 7-8 words) summary on the older games for those of us who mis-spent our youth elsewhere than in amusement arcades? For instance, 'platform-type. Paralysingly boring', or 'shoot'em-up. Simple but satisfactory'. That would be a tremendous help. The new games are undoubtedly superb, and we could afford to extend our collection considerably if the oldies became a better risk.

Mr & Mrs S. Gamble, Birmingham.

AA: Us, mis-spend our youth! Hah! We haven't even finished with it yet, whippersnappers that we are! Seriously, though, space is extremely limited as it is, what with all the new titles that are appearing, but it may be a possibility for the summer months. Before then, though, having asked around the office, we think that these older games are well worth a look if you can get them cheap: Bubble Bobble (cute arcade fun), Time Bandits (superb maze game), Tetris (superb puzzle game from Russia), Bionic Commando (platform game, now on budget), and Zynaps (a neat shoot'em-up).

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FROM START TO FINISH:

THE DIARY OF A GAME PART 2

"In the second part of our bi-monthly look at the development of a game, Andrew Braybrook talks us through the trials and tribulations that a programmer encounters whilst writing a game as he continues with Paradroid 90."

The story so far...

Work has been going well, despite a few interruptions from the still-unreleased Rainbow Islands. There are two decks up and running, with the player's sprite able to make his way between the two. A few graphics are still to be changed, and the rest of the decks need to be entered. Since the last diary, from the 10th of October onwards, Andrew worked on the robot-to-robot collision detection and tinkered with the maps and decks. We pick up the story on the 23rd, as Andrew battles on with the intricacies of Paradroid 90.



Graftgold's resident gurner, John Cummings, poses for the camera whilst playing Anco's Rally Cross - what a handsome chap, eh, readers...

Monday 23rd October.

I'd been having trouble with the robot-to-robot collisions. Instead of bumping into each other and then swivelling away, the robots kept locked together and appeared to be dancing until they finally drained each other of energy and blow up. The cure for this, as Dominic pointed out, was to back out the move that got them to collide properly. I was only backing out the pixel part of the move, whereas the full co-ordinates are stored in pixels and sub-pixels, so sometimes the full

move wasn't being backed out, and the robots still touched afterwards, result: much embarrassment to programmer who ought to know better. I also populated two more decks of my ship with consoles and a couple of robots to check out the packing away of robots on other decks. All seems well.

Monday 30th October

Our resident musical super-hero, Jason Page, has been beavering away writing the title sequence music using Soundtracker,

We weren't supposed to print this one, but how can we resist printing this piccy of diarist extraordinaire, Mr Andrew 'rock'n'roll is my life' Braybrook!



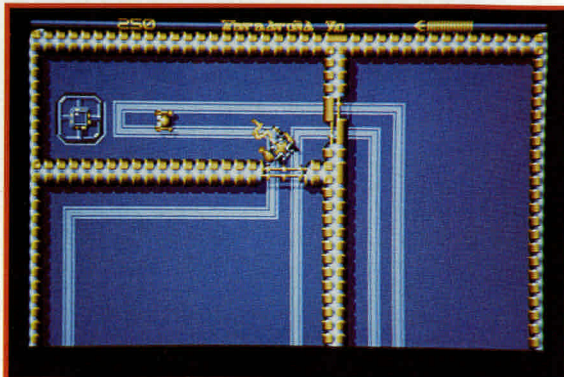
although the game will run our own music routines. So far, he's used rather a lot of memory on sampled sound, drums and things, but still no Rickenbacker bass. We'll resample the larger instruments when we have a clearer idea of how much memory is available.

Inter-robot collision is working most of the time now, it still can't fully cope with a three-way simultaneous collision, but with careful design of the ship layouts the likelihood of such an event can be reduced. I started drawing my first walking robot. I have budgeted for about half the robots being rotated in eight graphics frames, some of which will have three animation frames per rotation, which works out at 15K per robot body. The head being smaller, I can afford sixteen frames of rotation for a smoother effect. The heads will be independently controlled from the body to give a more realistic look to them. The internal machinations of the game will be working to 256 possible rotations, and the

nearest available rotation frame will be displayed. Most weapons will still fire in 256 directions, which will look a little odd at times but I'm prepared to put up with that. A super rotating-shrinking sprite chip would be useful here, as now featured on such arcade machines as Assault, but at least by drawing the frames by hand we can get the lighting correct on all the images rather than just rotate them on DPaint.

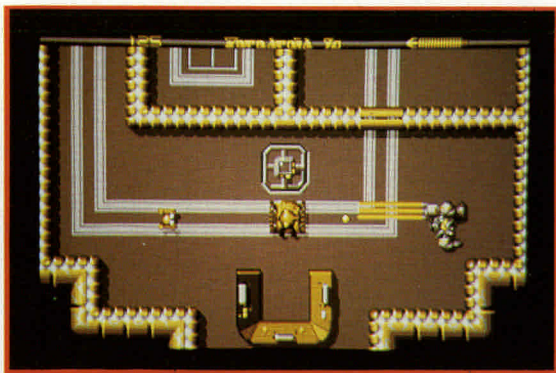
Tuesday 31st October - Wednesday 1st November.

Drew some more background details for inclusion in the background character set, including an airlock and some warning stripes. Started to decorate more decks and got bored fairly quickly. There's such a large area to cover, even on one ship, let alone five. Finished drawing and animating the first walking robot, with head in place, in direction at least. He's toting a rifle under his right arm and animates reasonable for three



Two robots battle it out as they approach the lift entrance.

The droids can now 'see' and 'hear' each other, and can react accordingly. As seen here, as a tank is attacked by a fellow droid.



frames. He's intended for the marauding pirates. I handed the graphics over to John to separate the head from the body and then spin them and relight them correctly. He'll be using Cyberpaint II for this.

Thursday 2nd November

As one in a series of 'nice touches', I wanted the shuttle window to be tinted and darken any robots that move under it. I was using a special shadow plotter of rectangular shape below the actual window of the shuttle to change the colours below. This effect turned out to be either unnoticeable on some sprites or a mess on others, or polarised them, so subtle shading suddenly looks horrible. So that idea was scrapped. Instead, I drew some flames for the shuttle's engines which will be activated when any robot approaches the shuttle cockpit. These will behave as bullets or explosions and will roast any robot standing by the engines. Great for the player, unless another robot switches them on as he goes past. That has always been one of Paratrooid's strong points: anything that the robots can do, so can the player, and vice versa.

Friday 3rd November

Drew some NASA rocket engines for the shuttle to make it clearer where the flames would come from. I also redrew the bridge radar screen as no-one knew what it was before. As the lift display now takes a long time to build, I changed the display so that it shows the outside of the ship and then adds the decks one at a time. This gives a lesser delay before something appears on the screen and creates movement on the screen where there was none. The display probably takes a little longer overall to draw as the screen swapping must be synchronised with the raster output on the monitor, but is much more interesting.

Monday 6th November

Gary Foreman will be starting

another project on 16-bit shortly, so I spent a while explaining how the Paratrooid AMP system works, and how the game interacts with the kernel. We are looking at alternate development systems using our PCs, so a bit of conversion may be necessary. We already have a number of PCs around from the 8-bit development systems, but up to now we have been using STs. Drew a smaller messenger droid in eight frames, for what was the 302 robot.

Tuesday 7th November

Got the pirate back from John in eight rotations. After some manipulation I got all the images into my sprite format. The helmeted head looked a bit messy as he had designed it in CAD and then spun and reduced it, which resulted in fairly fuzzy images. The reduction process was not very clean, as it didn't seem to be using a very good averaging system to pick the colour for each pixel. I spent an hour drawing all the heads by hand and produced a far more pleasing result.

Wednesday 8th November

I've been worrying about object allocation numbers for quite some time now. If I allow a maximum of, say, eighty objects on screen, then with this sort of game, sooner or later someone will manage to want eighty-one. At present, if an AMP tries to initiate a new object and no sprite blocks are available, a return-code is passed back and the AMP can instigate plan B, if it has one. Paratrooid will be running two sets of AMP, one for the main game, the other for the transfer game, during which all the current game AMPs are preserved so that the game can continue from exactly the right place. What is needed is a dynamic system whereby any number of AMPs may run, limited only by the memory available in the machine. Chris Hinsley is already doing this in Onslaught, and it works well.

The kernel's dynamic memory allocator is fairly fast - not quite as fast as having the sprite blocks ready and waiting, but the extra

freedom of having lots more sprites is well worth going for. Having a 1MEG machine will help a lot to unburden the memory allocator, but the game must still function as well in 512K, so I still have to be careful... but I'll code in contingencies if the memory does run out. A second problem with this approach is memory fragmentation, where different-sized blocks are allocated and freed willy-nilly, and one large block of memory becomes many small blocks. It is therefore essential to release all of the blocks of memory periodically so that the memory allocator can rebuild the large blocks again.

I put in all the changes and the program just refuses to run: it keeps leaping off into the middle of the kernel and grinding to a halt. This smells of corruption, which is a notoriously difficult beast to locate. So.... after much tearing of hair I decided to abandon that version, restore from back-up and start again. A corruption is often caused by accidentally moving or deleting a line of code, and almost impossible to spot. After putting all the changes in again, I was most irritated to discover that the game crashed in exactly the same way! Since it ended up in the kernel code, Dominic had a forage around on the stack and worked out what had been scribbled on, and what with. A whole stream of 6-byte table entries not entirely dissimilar to those in the background restore system, also being updated at the time and nothing to do with dynamic memory allocation at all.

Thursday 9th November

Implemented the AMP for the small messenger droid. This basically runs around minding its own business. Being a small sprite rather than a large one involves adjusting some patrolling routines as the patrol routes are measured from the top left corner of the sprites, which is fine for

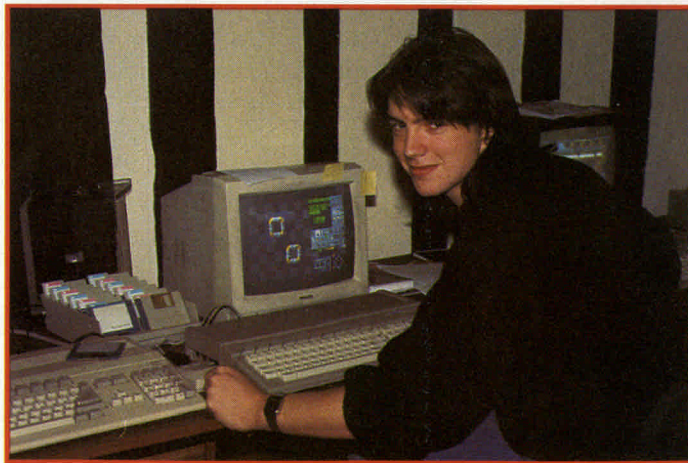
most of them, but not the little ones. Fixed an occasional bug that used to cause a slight screen corruption on the title page. This was yet another truncation of co-ordinates, and won't happen again... 'till the next time!

Friday 10th November

Put in a triple-laser weapon using my cell system which allows static objects to become part of the background temporarily. The laser beam is made out of a series of lines which sit around for a while in a chain and disappear one by one. The only disadvantage of this is that images have to be character-aligned.

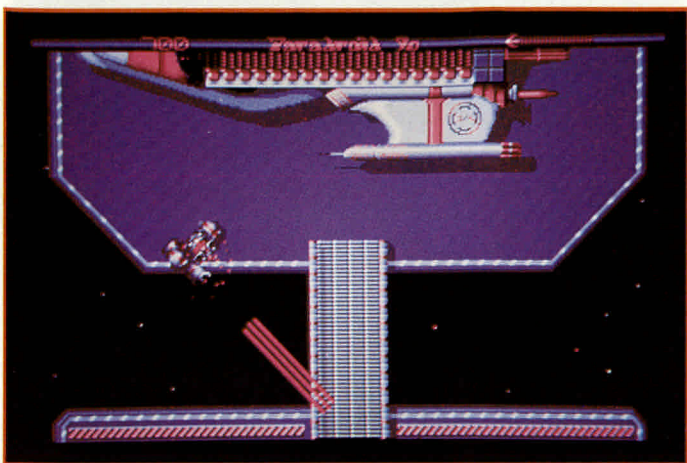
As part of the Apparent Intelligence system, I coded up the routines to allow robots to 'see' and 'hear' the player, as well as radar detection. Seeing involves the body of a robot asking the head which way it is facing, and calculating whether the player is visible in a sight-cone from the head. The angle of this cone is definable for each robot; some may have tunnel vision, some will have wide-angle vision. The distance each robot sees is also definable, so that some can be very short-sighted. Some robots will not have independent heads, so a second variant of the routine is required. The hearing system involves robots listening for the player's gun to fire. In order, that fair play is maintained, they will not react to other robots weapons. Thus a robot can now stand as a sentry and watch the player, not firing. As soon as the player opens fire, the robot will return fire.

To clarify my own internal definitions, I have now designated a robot as being a composite object, consisting of a body doing all of the moving and generally being in charge, and a head which has its own program, but taking orders from its body. Additionally the body can get extra information from the head.



Graphics chap, Michael Field, takes a break from redrawing Andrew's graphics to have his picture taken.

A deadly tri-laser spews death across the screen whilst guarding the shuttle.



The body carries the weapon and will decide when to fire based on this information.

Other types of object are: tanks, where the turret (or head) carries the weapon and does the firing, and dumb objects having no independent head. These might be simple cleaning devices or security orbs.

Saturday 11th November

Implemented a small particle explosion for when bullets hit solid objects, as in the C64 version. Each particle is running under its own AMP and has its own shadow. Generating about a dozen particles is enough, three at a time. An unexpected bonus is that since the bullet has hit a wall to stop in the first place, and since the particles are generated in random directions, those that head further into the wall are instantly purged, so only those moving back from the wall appear. I was wondering how that could be done.

On a 1 Meg test machine it took a while to spot, but 'The Creeping Death' exists deep in the bowels of fast memory. After generating a few particles I decided to check on how available memory was doing, and

something was eating it up, slowly but surely. I wrote a 'sniffer' routine to execute after each object and spot when some memory goes astray, it's still looking.

Sunday 12th November

Getting really worried about this memory loss. What was the question again? Oh, yes, 'The Creeping Death', well there are only a few places where memory is requested, and even less where it's given back, so it didn't take long to narrow the culprit down to the background task which is responsible for looking along the leading edge of the scroll window for new objects to activate. This marvellous piece of code says: "Ok boys, new object to create, get some memory, great, now... oops, that object is already alive so I don't need to generate it, let's exit" which consequently forgets about the memory it has just been allocated and it's lost forever. A quick re-arrangement of the code and everything is alright again. Now I can sleep at night.

Monday 13th November

New graphics artist starting today, one Michael Field, whose first task

will be to draw my robots and backgrounds properly. We've decided to double-light the objects, from a major source from top left, and a minor one from bottom-right. Using the new palette we should be able to get some excellent looking robots.

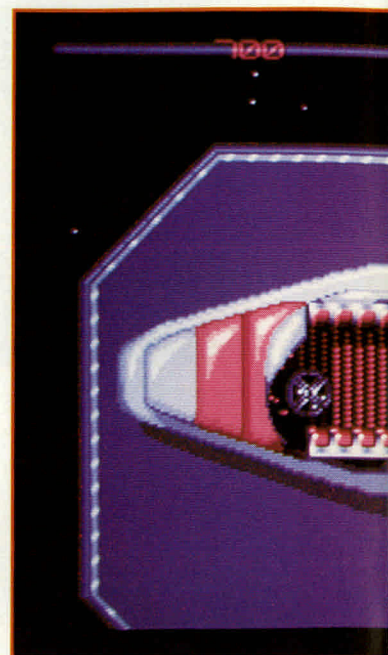
Tuesday 14th November

Implemented a proximity mine-firing weapon. The mine is flung across the room, lands on the floor, waits for about five seconds and then explodes. It also explodes if a robot touches it during that period. Again, this uses the cell system and suffers from the mine 'snapping' onto character boundaries as it stops moving. Don't like it at all. Some problems were also observed as the mine skids across the floor. It must stop at the consoles and other low objects which can normally be fired over. The biggest discrepancy is still that firing a mine across an open area of space will cast a shadow on space, destroying the whole space continuum with it. I'll have to think about this one.

Thursday 16th November

Up to now the flame-thrower weapon has been drawn in sprites and can only fire in eight directions. This severely limits the firer of this weapon, so I redesigned the weapon to fire a trail of particles which look remarkably like the original flames, but can fire in any direction. It takes a while to run it as each particle of the flame is individually animated and drifts slowly outwards. It does save a lot of graphics memory and plot time so I'm happy with it, though.

Started laying the foundations for the disruptor and designed a new directable scatter-fire weapon which builds in front of the player before firing seven bullets in an arc. I pressed my FanFire routine into action,



previously seen releasing bats from Big Dracula on Monster Island.

Friday 17th November

Tried to design a new Influence device and put in a new mine design which does not use the cell system as it is animated, which looks a little better but still can't be fired across space. It's not so much the shadow, I think I could get around that, but firing it across an open airlock you would expect it to drift off into space, not just sit there in limbo. More thinking needed.

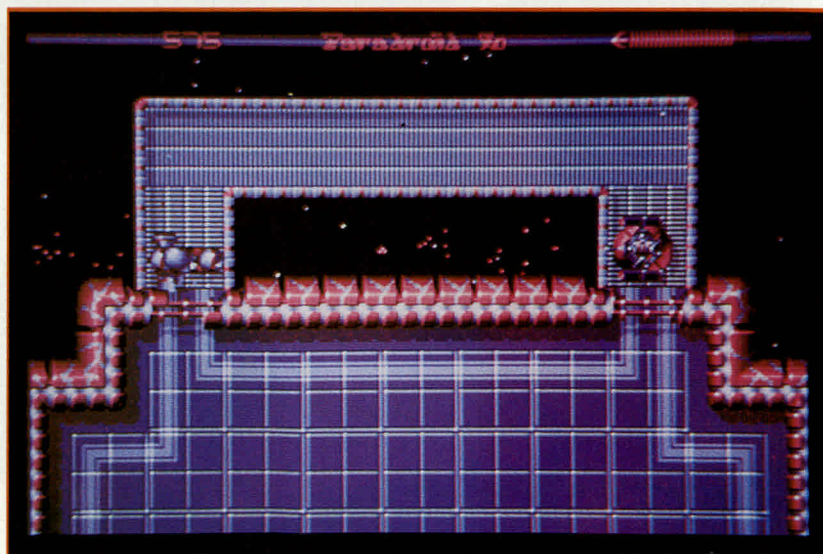
Monday 20th November

Due to a monumental error introduced into the robot's AMPs, the robots keep killing themselves and each other before I can get to see them. As soon as a robot hits a patrol point, it dies. I was using the wrong manoeuvre error vector, so a quick wave of the magic mouse mat and bingo, all the robots are happy again, except the messenger, which refuses to be killed at all.

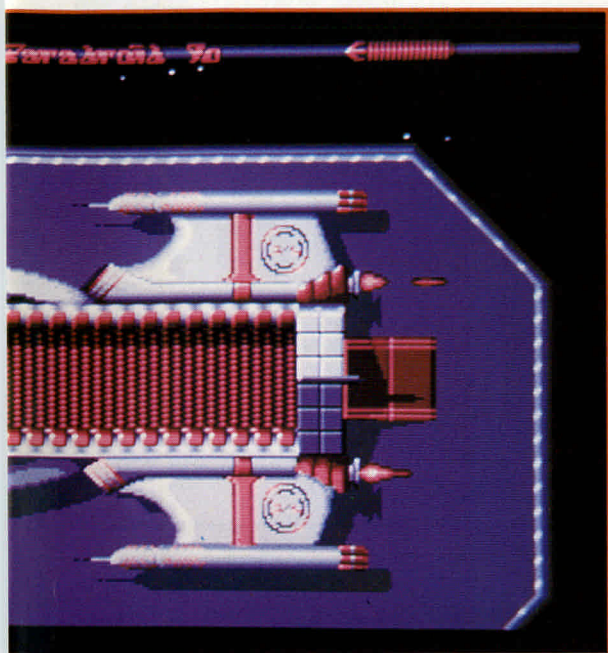
Tuesday 21st November

Implemented the mini battle tank. I have decided that this vehicle will not rotate. I shall use them in one of the cargo bays to block the player's path. They will have a lot of energy but a fast decay rate so the player will not be stuck in one for long.

David O'Conner suggested when robots die they lose their heads and career about madly for a while before blowing up. This was not too tricky to do and adds to the fun, as getting too close to one of these is really dangerous, they fire madly and crash into walls before exploding.



The Influence Device plays a deadly cat and mouse game as one of the higher-ranked robots pursues it. Andrew hopes to have up to eighty different robots in all, ranging from deadly war-machines to menial droids that simply deliver messages and tidy the decks.



Seen here in all its glory - the NASA shuttle. As droids pass over an adjacent square, they can ignite the retros, killing any unfortunates in the burner's path!

Wednesday 22nd November

Designed some larger consoles and put them into mapper, which makes them look more like the correct scale. Put in the new Influence Device that Michael has drawn, which will allow a controlled robot to be seen through the device as it splits into four segments. The materialisation sequence looks a lot better too.

Thursday 23rd November

Put in the disruptor for the first time, as a hybrid missile type which globally collides with everything. As with the C64 version it is necessary to know who fired the disruptor so that points can be awarded for player kills but not for robots killing robots. The player must also be immune from his own disruptor. All disruptor-firing robots will, naturally, be disruptor-proof, and some other robots will also have this feature. Michael is busy doing a laser-toting robot built like an American Footballer. He looks real mean, the footballer, not Michael.

Up to now the player control AMP has been something of a dishevelled mess, and badly needs rewriting to incorporate the ability to transfer.

Friday 24th November

Rewrote the player's AMP which is all working bar the fact that the Device is not releasing its slave body properly when destroyed. Our regular critic, Mr. O'Conner, has been heard complaining that robot explosions are visible even through a robot that wasn't blown up, so this has been sorted out.

Monday 27th November

After lengthy discussions with David and John we have decided

on a new format for all of our graphics, which incorporates an X offset so that an animated sprite can appear bigger than any of its components without having to move the object. We will still save the graphics from Art Studio but with all leading blank lines present, and David's new sprite stripper will remove all unnecessary data and build 12 byte headers for each image. This utility will run on a PC, which can happily read three-and-a-half inch disks and provides a hard disk for storage of graphics, long since overdue, and they won't then clog up the hard disk on my development machine.

I had to re-write the front-end of my sprite plotters to cope with the new headers, which detail whether the sprites are sixteen or thirty-two pixels wide, so each

sprite knows its width rather than the AMP having to know. This is an anomaly that has been needing me for some time.

Tuesday 28th November

Implemented the new plot routines, some of which haven't actually been used yet, and the changeover has been completed fairly smoothly. There is no going back now. Having all the graphics together also means that I can load the graphics from disk at run time instead of assembling them into the game. That means the intermediate file is about half its previous size and takes much less time to link and write out to disk.

Wednesday 29th/Thursday 30th November

Michael has finished his battle droid, and has certainly gone to town on the size of it. I originally intended the robots to be about 24x24 pixels big, but this one is 32x32 and with the extra offsets he'll end even bigger. That will make it quite a squeeze through the doors.

Implementing the new robot as the laser he fires is limited to

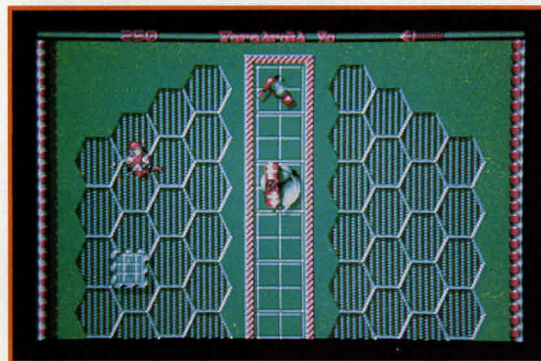
eight directions, so if he stands and keeps firing and missing he looks pretty stupid. Thus I made him fire once and resume patrolling. This makes him more of a menace because he still may not shoot at the player, but in conjunction with other robots he can block the player's escape. Keeping on the move should allow him to hit the player sooner or later.

Delved inside the Amiga again to stop screen break-up as mentioned before. A quick reseating of the chips seems to do the trick.

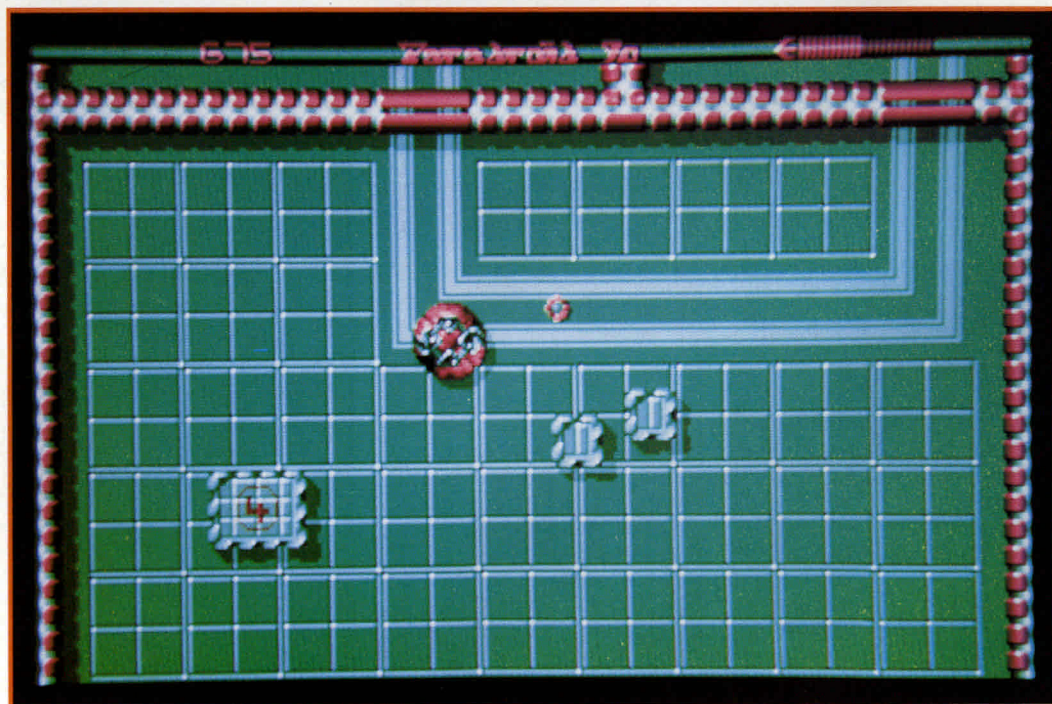
Tuesday 5th December

Michael has been drawing a new security droid with two-head mounted guns. This looks suitable to fire my particle-scatter weapon, except that my game system doesn't currently support the release of two independent bullets from two separate places. I'll either have to add some routines, or cut one of the guns off. Having spent ages rotating the head in eight directions, Michael may not be too impressed at changing it.

To be continued...



A robot, looking suspiciously like an American footballer, goes walkies through one of the four existing decks.



The influence device makes its way over one of the sketchily-drawn decks. Expect more detail in the final version.

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PINBALL MAGIC

Surprisingly, Pinball games have never really taken off on the Amiga like they did on the C64. In its heyday, the 64 boasted such brilliant pinball sims as David's Midnight Magic, and even a construction set by Ariolasoft, and Macadam Bumper by Ere Informatique. On the Amiga, though, the only half-decent pinball game is Activision's conversion of the Sega coin-op, Timescanner, and that failed to impress, mainly because of the stop-start movement of the ball which failed to give the game any feeling of realism. It is getting the 'feel' of the real thing, and producing realistic ball actions that makes the difference between a good pinball game and a bad one, and Loricels hope to have conquered that large hurdle in Pinball Magic.

The game is set over twelve, individually-loaded tables, and to access each table, you must complete a set pattern on each. Each table is made up of the usual bumpers, bonus gates and features, but items, such as bricks that have to be chipped away, Arkanoid-style, have now been added, adding a dimension real tables couldn't achieve. You are given five balls to use on the table, but extra ones can be gained by scoring

GRAPHICS

Nice and colourful, with the colours used to good effect, Pinball Magic looks attractive - if very 8-bitesque. However, a few extra table-top features would have been nice.

61%

SOUND

The title tune is OK, but will have you reaching for the volume control before long, and the same can be said about the annoying in-game effects.

50%

over a certain level of points. The mouse is used to propel the ball into play, and the flippers are then activated by use of the two Alt keys that flank the spacebar. In addition, the Amiga keys can be used to 'tilt' the table, but doing so results in your flippers locking up.

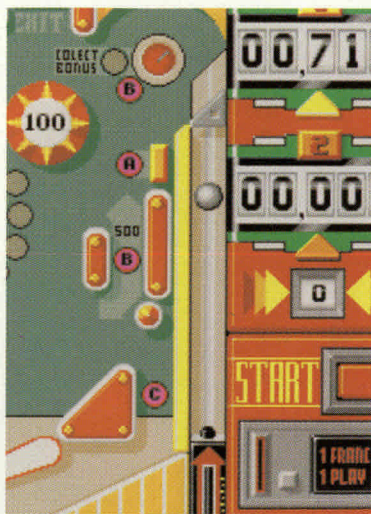
STEVE

Pinball Magic is a fairly playable game, and is certainly better than Timescanner at emulating Pinball, but its lasting appeal is extremely dubious. The movement of the ball is fluid and effective, but I found that the tables were repetitive, and would have preferred to have had a few, newer features on them. However, I'm not saying that Pinball Magic is a poor game, it's just more suited for the younger, less fussy, gamers.

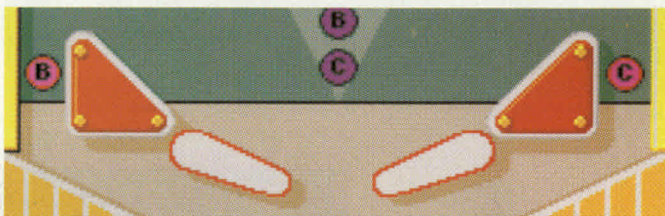
OVERALL
RATING

62%

■ Shooting the ball into play is effected by the mouse. Having started the game, a small line is pulled back, indicating the strength of the shot, and releasing the mouse button propels the ball into play.



■ The correct sequence for completing a table can range from lighting up a sequence of letters, to knocking down a wall of bricks. All that remains then is to get the ball through the small portal at the top of the screen and on to the next table.



■ Tilting the table is prompted by a frantic pressing of the Amiga keys, but has the adverse effect of causing your flippers to lock up.



■ As you would expect, each table is choc-a-bloc with bumpers, bonus gates, and the like. And a wise player will stay on the ear, attempting to collect as many bonus points and ball as possible before going on to the harder stages.

DOUG

I have never really been that enamoured with computer interpretations of pinball, as they are never as good as standing in front of the real thing, knocking the stuffing out of it. However, Pinball Magic is definitely one of the better ones, and offers realistic ball movement and a nice variety of bumpers and the like. That said, like the real thing, the game can get very tedious, and a 'continue' option would have been nice. To use a naff old adage: 'try before you buy.'

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P-47

Jaleco's P-47 coin-op looks extremely dated compared to the likes of Forgotten Worlds, Chase HQ, or any of the Sega machines, but it offers the playability some gamers claim is sorely lacking in coin-ops recently. Like Silkworm, P-47 is a shoot'em-up from the 'old school', and was one of the first

of its genre to feature add-ons - a feature we tend to expect from a shoot'em-up these days. The game's scenario is minimal to say the least: you are a lone pilot who has been sent in his P-47 to battle his way through eight levels of planes, tanks, and boats, in a last-hope mission to destroy the super-weapon that lies at the end of each stage.

You begin your mission armed with a standard issue plane, and three lives in tow. Scrolling from left to right, the enemy squadrons appear from both sides of the screen, and contact with these, or the flak that they fire in all directions, results in the loss of one of these lives.

Concealed within the waves of planes, tanks and gun turrets, are clusters of inconspicuous helicopters that, when shot, relinquish a useful add-on for your plane. Ranging from bombs and missiles to extra speed, these enhancements make the task in hand slightly easier; dying, however, results in the loss of one third of your collected firepower. Once you have run the gauntlet of the enemy forces, you will come up against the massive weapon that you have been sent to destroy. On the first level, you come

DOUG

I really enjoyed P47. It doesn't offer anything new, and it certainly doesn't beat Xenon II in the graphics and sound stakes, but what it does have is good old fashioned playability. However, I do feel that the price tag is rather heavy and the game doesn't offer real value for money. A pity, as at the price it probably won't sell as well as it deserves to.

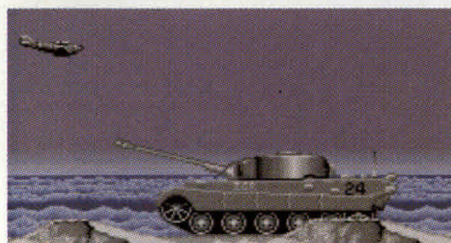
across a train carrying a powerful gun, but on the later levels you will encounter huge, bullet-spewing planes and boats, all of which must be destroyed by repeatedly shooting or bombing them.

**OVERALL
RATING**

61%



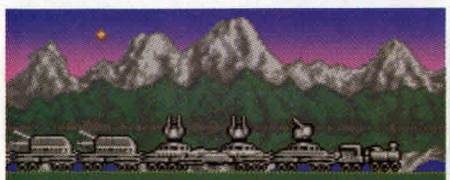
■ (Above & left) Battling through the waves of enemy forces with a gun that amounts to little more than a pea-shooter isn't the easiest thing to do, but by shooting the helicopters that hide amongst the attack waves, icons can be collected which give you extra features, such as missiles, bombs and extra speed.



■ (Above & below) The end-of-level motherships in P-47 range from huge tanks to armoured trains, and must be destroyed before advancing to the next stage. Bomb and shoot them with everything you have, until they explode, and the word 'completed' appears.



■ Every now and then, the enemy planes make way for a larger, deadlier adversary. Avoiding contact with it and its firepower, you repeatedly shoot at it until it explodes.



■ Your final adversary is a huge battleship and you must first fly past, taking out its installations and gun turrets, and then fly back over it to take out the command tower.



STEVE

As with Silkworm, the 8-bit-style graphics and simple gameplay of P-47 don't make it look particularly appealing. However, behind the unimpressive presentation lies a neat little shoot'em-up which, while not being Earth-shattering, is a competent blast and one with which you can just turn your brain off and play. However, the one reason I cannot recommend P-47 is the price, and considering the repetitive nature of the gameplay, it just doesn't represent good value for money.

SOUND

A pleasant tune follows your progress, and is interrupted by some effective, if a little tinny, sound effects.

50%

GRAPHICS

Small, but detailed sprites and some nice backdrops which, although looking dated, are very close to those of the coin-op.

53%

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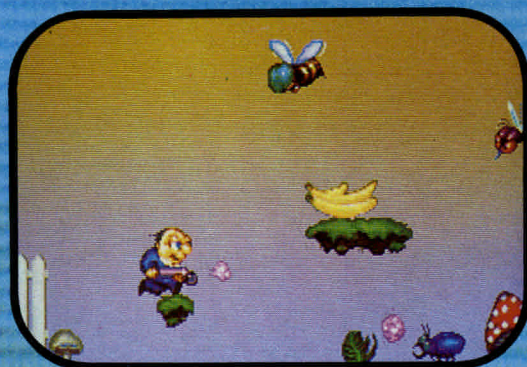


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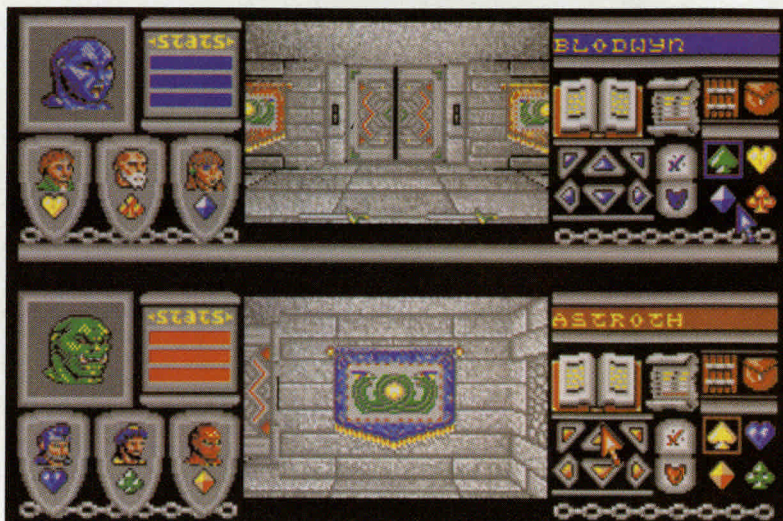
Boggits Domain

Now let me see, what's been happening this month? It's been pretty quiet really, which is strange as this is when the software companies should be doing their best business. I suppose you've been sitting in the semi-darkness of your backroom, glowering at the haunted glitter-tube, extracting your money's worth from your Christmas presents.

Some kindly soul gave me a book for a present, containing a detailed examination of a typical computer adventure enthusiast. It would appear that you are male, reasonably intelligent, but socially awkward. You have few friends, even fewer girlfriends and prefer communication with computers as you find them easier to understand and control. You come from an unloving family and, before becoming interested in computers, you were either very interested in 'techie' hardware or you were into reading science-fiction in a big way. What a Bloody Cheek! I'll have you know that the only thing that I am into in a big way is princesses - and I've got the testimonials to prove it. However, I will say that upon reflection I do know quite a few human adventurers who fit the description. But they are all Atari ST owners (I use the term human in its loosest term (so much for your 'no ST-owner jibes resolution! - Ed)).

Along with the usual crop of letters from the bewildered, I have just received my copy of THE HOUND OF SHADOW. I am quite surprised that a text adventure is still able to pull the crowds, as we are told on every side that they are dead. Reminds me of the telegram which Mark Twain sent home which read: 'Reports of my death are an exaggeration'.

I'm pleased to say that I have also received FUTURE WARS from PALACE SOFTWARE. This is a French game, which I must confess tends to make my British nostrils quiver suspiciously, but in this case 'Le Frog' appears to

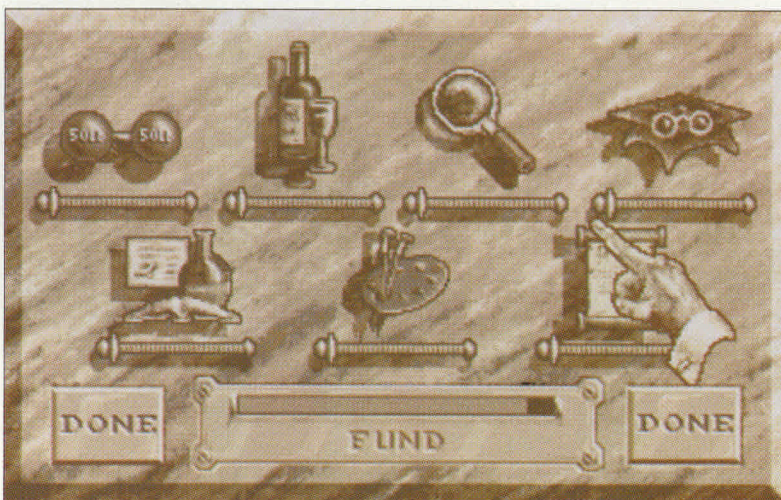


The first Bloodwych data disk is here - watch out for our definitive review next month.

know his onions. The opening music and graphics are very impressive and, apart from an initial hiccup, I found that I was able to move forward quite smoothly into the game. The messages appear to be written in English instead of the usual mid-channel pidgin, and all the artwork is tip-top. I've no doubt we will be hearing more of this game throughout the year, especially when the letters start rolling in from the 'bleeding hearts' brigade. In which case I'll beat you all to it and offer the solution to the first

problem. To get rid of your boss and pass through the first door - Fill your bucket with water, operate the boss's door, then quickly use the bucket on the door. This will place the bucket on the half-opened door. If you now operate the other door, your boss will enter the room and get the bucket on his head. You will now be free to pass to the next room.

I also hear that the Branson's Virgin balloon is about to pop up carrying the resurrected Magnetic Scrolls Software House, and Virgin Mastertronic are to release a



The text adventure is dead. Long live the text adventure! Confused, if so, check out EA's Hound of the Shadow to see what we're ranting about.

budget adventure. Well it's news, but how breathless we should be about it I have yet to decide.

All Hands to the Ladder in Space Quest II

Yo, Boggit! Greetings from the Ogre. I agree wichchoo, Baby, these humans are the pits. Us weird guys have got to stick together, Brother. Normally I wouldn't come around spoiling your cool, but hey!, I'm in big trouble with Space Quest II. I'm trying to climb down this ladder into a black pit and like, it's really dark. Now I know you're going to say, 'Why ain't yo got no light?', but I have. I just ain't got enough hands to hold the ladder and the light!

So here's my prob, ole Boggit Baby. How can a dude hold the light crystal while climbing the ladder. Lay it on me, ma man.

J. Osmo (The Ogre) Manchester

I've a feeling you just might have more troubles than you think. Well, the answer's pretty easy really. Where do you normally hold things when you are using two hands to do something else? Hold it in your mouth of course. When I go out last thing at night to 'water my petunia patch' before going to bed, I hold my lantern in my mouth when I'm using both hands. Mind you, I still manage to get my slippers wet!

Where Can You Stick your French Stick in Zak McKracken!

Well, it's about time we had some help for Amiga Adventurers, although I'm not sure that a Boggit is quite what I was looking for. Still I suppose you'll have to do. My problem is in Zak MacKracken. I have a French Stick and I don't know what to do with it (Oooer!). I'm pretty sure that I should be using it to feed a bird, but it's sooooo big! Is there a knife somewhere to cut it up.

G. Bradley, York

Well, if a Boggit isn't good enough for you I could arrange for your letters to be dealt with by a pink, fluffy bunnykins. It isn't a knife you

P. Moore, from Wolverhampton is having trouble getting past the hungry tentacle in Maniac Mansion. To fill him up enough to let you pass, just give the greedy plant the wax fruit, followed by some fruit juice to wash it down.



need to cut up the stale bread, it's a tool box. Or to be more precise, you need the monkey wrench from the tool box. Using this you can dismantle the pipe under your sink, which is part of the waste disposal unit. It's into the waste disposal unit that you stick the bread, and 'voila' - we ave zee French bread crumbs!

Dungeon Master's Skeleton in the Staircase

I'm getting pretty confused with all the strange keys that are to be found in Dungeon Master. I have found a Skeleton Key, but so far I can't make it work. Is this the same as a lock-pick that I have read about in other readers' letters? Do I need a spell to make the key open some of the locked doors or is it used in some special place? I also seem to be short of a Ra key somewhere. Be a pal, Boggit, and help me out. I appeal to you..

J. Green, Weymouth

You don't appeal to me at all, Sunshine (Yep, the old jokes are the best). For a start, you can forget about lockpicks. As I understand it those items were only included in overseas versions of the game and were never fully implemented. The skeleton key you have found does not open any old door, it is used in a special place. Running down through the centre of the Dungeon is a secret

staircase which gives you a short-cut between levels that you have already sussed out. Somewhere on each of the lower levels is the carving of a skull's head on the wall. Operate the key on this carving and a secret door will open. Don't bother trying to nip down the stairs and skip a level, it can't be done. You can only open doors onto the staircase from the inside.

Keep Taking the Tablets in Leisure Suit Larry I

I am looking for a rope in Leisure Suit Larry and I only hope I am still sane enough to use it when I finally find it. At the moment I feel as if I will probably hang myself because my frustration level must be almost as high as Larry's. There is a bottle of pills on a window ledge on the second floor of Lefty's Bar and I'm pretty sure that if I had a rope I could use it to get to them. Can you confirm my theory and tell me where the rope is?

P. Wardil, Harlow

Well, Professor, your theory seems spot-on to me. Of course I didn't work it out, I read it in the mucky mag which you can find in the Drug Store. (Incidentally, other adventurers may be interested to hear of the constipated theoretician who worked it out with a pencil - oh well, maybe not!) As

Getting into the coach is proving difficult for Andy Jason from Norwich! Buffoon, this is easy! Just use the kazoo to wake up the sleeping driver - easy, or what!



for the rope, well you needn't look for it, it will find you. Concentrate on marrying Fawn and, believe me, all the loose ends will get tied up by themselves.

Knock and Ye Shall Enter Into the World of Bureaucracy

Am I the only person in the world who has played Bureaucracy? I regularly scan the pages of Adventure columns for hints for this great Infocom adventure, but it's never mentioned. Someone should shout that this game is really fun and better than a lot of British adventures which I find quite boring.

Having said how great I think it is I must now confess that, great or otherwise, I'm stuck. There is a door in the brownstone building at the end of the street which I can't get open. The door's locked and I have no key. Is this just a dummy door or can it be opened?

H. Graves, Alton

No you're not, I've played it too, and I also think it's one of the best. The puzzle you mention is one of those simple things that upon reflection make you feel really stupid. Being brought up on adventures where you are the only living creature, you tend to think that you are the only character who can influence objects in the game. In this case, simply 'Knock On Door' will bring the guy inside to the door to open it. I had the same trouble with the gate in

Legend of the Sword. I tried every way I could think of to open the gate and failed. It was then that a passing fool (who I will never forgive!) asked why I didn't just climb over it. That's the trouble with fools, they can be so damned smart.

Waiting for Developments in Personal Nightmare.

Being a super-cool thief I have managed to steal the roll of film out of the dead photographer's pocket before the police arrived. I have also been smart enough to get into his house and find his dark-room. I have topped all these clever tricks by finding the developing chemicals and then tried to develop the film - but disaster has struck. The game says the chemicals are no good and the film won't develop. Where can I find some other chemicals?

N. Rattray, Glasgow

I, too, have tried to develop my own films in the past as I rightly believed that the little old lady in the local chemist shoppe would have a blue fit if she saw what I had taken photographs of. As there are no other suitable chemicals around the village I think you would be better off sending your photographs away to be developed. Of course, that means you will need some money to buy a stamp. I trust you have found the old Post Office Savings Book in the vicarage bedroom? Incidentally, my photographs were

of a ghost, what did you think I meant?

Taken for a Ride in Infocom's Trinity

I was advised by some 'friend' that if I wanted to play a great adventure I should buy Infocom's game, TRINITY. I am nowhere near the end and already I am hopelessly stuck. I asked my friend if he could help, but he said he couldn't because: 'He has never actually played it!' Please save my sanity and my friend's neck by answering this silly question.

I am in the park and I think I must cross over some grass which has a KEEP OFF sign on it. Each time I walk across it I get thrown back. Where's the sense in it?

J. Cooper, Brighton

There is a lot of wind about in the park, isn't there? There is also an empty pram to be found next to one of the entrance gates.

Grab the pram and push it around until you find the old lady whose umbrella gets blown into a tree. Kicking the football, which you can also get quite easily, will knock the brolly down and you can pick that up as well. If you then wait until the wind is in the right direction, you can sit in the pram, open the brolly and, wheeee, you're home and dry.

This is a beautifully written game, which has some great descriptive text built into it. If you want to try an all-text adventure which is different and also quite challenging then look no further.

Ah well, that will do for now. One last walk around the tree to stretch my legs, then it's out with the lantern and off to bed. Remember before you go to bed tonight to repeat the Amiga Owner's prayer. 'Lord, save me from the sin of pride and make me humble like an Atari ST User - BUT NOT YET!'

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channels for sports fans and news followers - and let's not forget the movie channel either, which shows films, such as Predator, The Fly, Three Men and a Baby, and the like.

As well as this neat first prize,

though, there are also twenty copies of Retaliator available for runners-up. So, what are you waiting for? Grab a pen, and answer the following questions and you could be on your way to a prize. When you've answered them, pop

the answers in an envelope and send it to:

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THE ULTRA-HARD QUESTIONS

1. Elliott Ness is one of the main characters in one of Ocean's new games. Which game is he from?

- A) Cabal B) The Untouchables
C) Beach Volley D) Chase HQ

2. One of Ocean's games broke all records for staying at the top of the software charts. What was it?

- A) Batman The Movie B) New Zealand Story
C) Robocop D) Red Heat

3. Name the actor who played Batman in the recent smash-hit film.



Ocean Competition

Answer 1

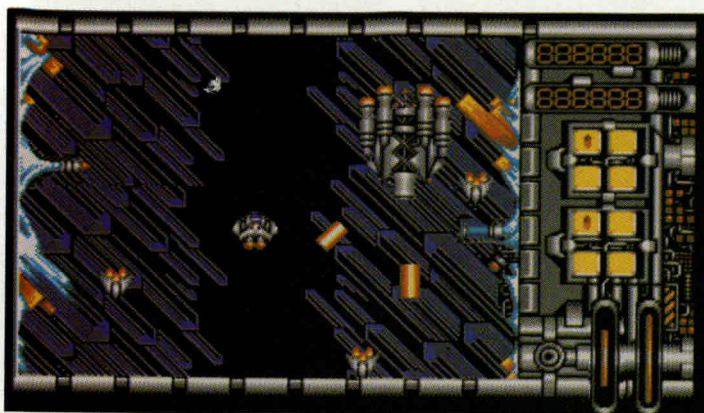
Answer 2

Answer 3

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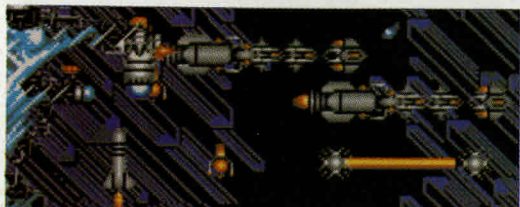
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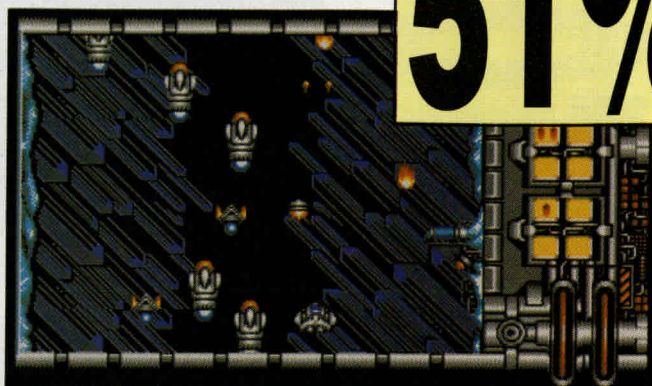
(Left) A slightly larger than usual space ship makes its way towards you and, unfortunately, it has an equally large weapons system; but with a few blasts of your laser and you'll have him at bay.

**OVERALL
RATING**

51%

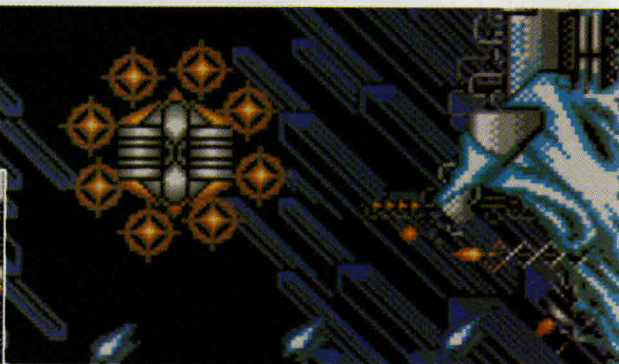
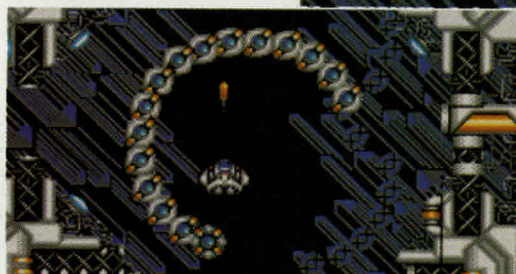


(Right) There are ten icons to collect, but only the right combination will prove effective.



After shooting an alien you collect an icon that is left and link it to your ship. The weapon is the powerful Laser Net and not much will be left after you launch this little beauty.

(Right) At last you make it to the end-of-level guardian, but for those of you who have played Xenon II, doesn't he look a bit familiar? Shame the game's playability hasn't been copied.



Hanging on to the side of the wall, an alien gun emplacement shoots bullets at your ship, but can you get close enough to the wall to shoot him and not crash.

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OUTLANDS

The outlands is a small strip of desolate space that leads to your command station. Up until now, no-one has even thought that an attack force would try to navigate the maze of tangled space debris that seems enough protection for the rear of the command station, and because of this false sense of security there are no fighters to protect the station, except that is for a new experimental fighter on its

way to one of the more important stations. Maybe if this craft be launched the attack force can be held up long enough for some reinforcements to arrive. It's a long shot, but it might just work.

The fighter has been equipped with a new weapons system that allows you to collect and use various weapons that can be found floating in the wreckage of space. There are

DOUG

Outlands seems to be a clone of R-Type, Blood Money, and Xenon II, but even with similar features from all of these games, Outlands still seems to be just another run-of-the-mill, not that impressive, game. The mini-guardians that you encounter during the game are a pain and don't really pose any real threat, and if you have a few extra weapons, the game is a cinch. Not the sort of game I would recommend.

eight different slots that weapons can be slotted into, so that almost any kind of weapon can be linked to your controls; but the main thing that will keep you alive is your piloting skills. Weapons can also be collected and used after shooting various ships that you come across, but only certain weapons can be used in conjunction with others and collecting some weapons will sometimes mean the loss of another.

Two players can play simultaneously, but how you share the weapons between

GRAPHICS

Like all the other aspects of the game, the graphics are average. But the main problem is that sometimes the game slows down to a dead stop for no reason whatsoever.

47%

SOUND

The title screen music is very good and goes on for a short while, but the sound effects in the game are few and far between.

53%

yourselves will determine whether the game is won or lost. Many mini-guardians will be encountered on the way to the end of each attack force (and to the main end-of-level guardian itself) and these will either have to be shot or avoided if you are to carry on with your impossible mission.

STEVE

Playing Outlands was like taking a walk down memory lane. As I made my way through the stages, scenery very reminiscent of that in R-Type scrolled by, and I was attacked by enemy fighters that hadn't seen action since the days of Plutos and Goldrunner. This is the basic problem with Outlands: it gives a feeling of *deja vu* and brings back memories of all the shoot'em-ups you have ever played. What's worse, it does nothing to add to the genre, and in the end looks dated and stale.

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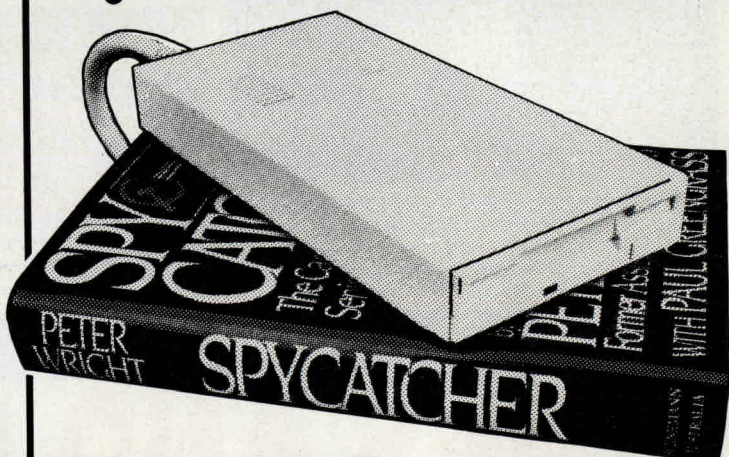
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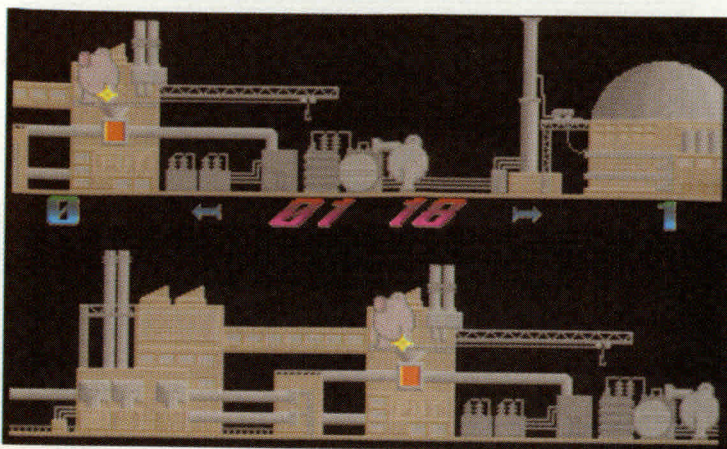
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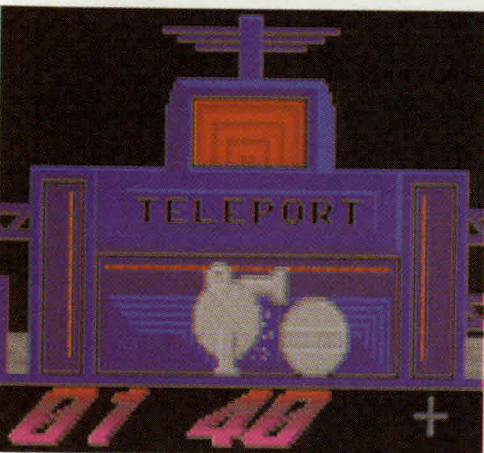
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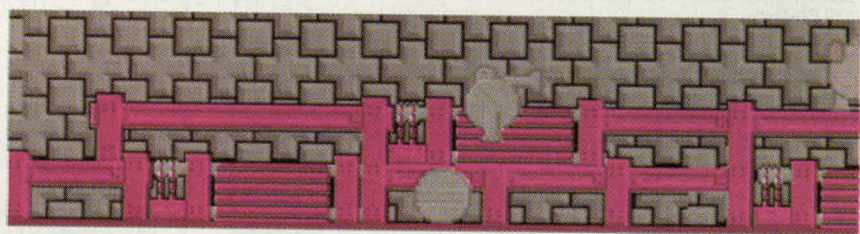
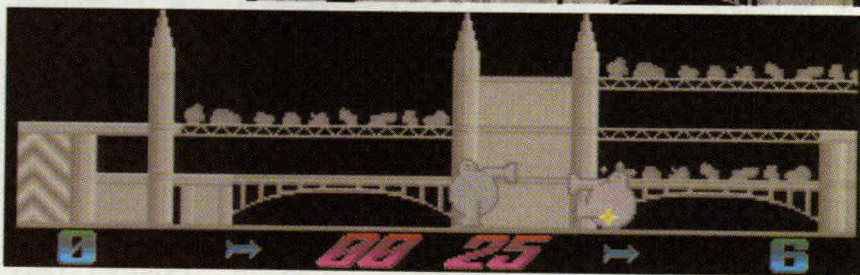


(Left) The object of the game is to race across the playfield in an attempt to grab the Glidstar. If you're quick enough you can score before your opponent manages to catch you.

(Right & right below) If the opposition get the star before you, all you have to do to retrieve it is to curl up into a ball and knock them over, thus making them drop the ball. Then you can grab the star and score while they are still dazed.



The teleporters hold the key to this level, because it is quicker to pick up the star by teleporting next to it, and then teleporting up to his goal and dropping the star in.



The escalators transport Limes and Napoleon to the top of the platforms, so making it easier to gain access to the star.

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LIMES AND NAPOLEON

The Glidstar lies in front, as does your robotic opponent. The klaxon sounds and the game begins. Napoleon rushes forward to take control of the star at the beginning but, before long, Limes curls up into a ball and bowls Napoleon off of his feet. With the star now in a neutral position, Limes lurches forward in an attempt to put the score at one-nil, and with the

speed of a cheetah, he rolls along, picks up the star and throws it in the goal.

Limes and Napoleon are two robots which have been developed in a research laboratory called the Centre of Aeronautic Robotic Lorans, or C.A.R.L. for short, and to test each of their designs to the full, they enter them in a duel over the Glidstar. This is where you

DOUG

In Limes and Napoleon you play the part of a robot who has to rush forward, pick up a jewel, take it back to the goal box - and that's it. I think it's fair to say that Limes and Napoleon would make a brilliant present for your six-year-old brother, but apart from him and anyone around the same age, I don't think there will be many for whom it has much appeal. Limes and Napoleon isn't the sort of game I'd rush out and buy

come in, because you take control of Limes, and a friend or the computer takes the place of Napoleon. By a simple press of the button or movement of the joystick, you can send your robotic buddy into a head-spinning roll or pick up the star in his snout. Obstacles such as teleporters and escalators can either hinder or aid you in the desperate battle for maximum points, so you have to be quick

GRAPHICS

Nicely drawn and coloured backgrounds; the sprites are dull and poorly animated, though.

49%

SOUND

A choice of three nice tunes play throughout, as well as a couple of spot sound effects which accompany the action.

53%

on the joystick if you are to win.

Every now and then, a third robot will appear and make life harder for the winner by aiding the loser. An extra body can be found for both Limes and Napoleon, and it is possible to jump between them at any time..

ALEX

Limes and Napoleon can be best described as a brave attempt at a football-type game, with a few extra touches. Sadly, I'm afraid it fails to inspire, and I found myself playing a game which I found tedious rather than enjoyable. Not a bad attempt, but I think that if you shop around you'll probably find better.

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THE UNTOUCHABLES

Al Capone must have been the most notorious villain to rule the underworld of Chicago, renowned for his vicious killings of innocent citizens. Feared by everyone, no-one dared to question the word of

Capone because, if they did, they would be visited by a group of his murderous henchmen. Based closely on the film of the same name starring Sean Connery (who incidentally was awarded an oscar for his performance of the aging cop, Malone), Ocean have created a six-level shoot 'em-up where you take on the role of either Ness, Stone, Malone or Wallace, otherwise known as the Untouchables, and attempt to win the desperate battle against the world-famous Capone.

The warehouse is the setting for level one, and the whole place is crawling with psychopathic gangsters armed to the teeth, all with the intention of gunning Elliot

Ness down. Armed with your trusty Tommy gun, ten of Capone's bookkeepers have to be eliminated, leaving evidence to aid the arch gangster's conviction. The border raid on the bridge is the second stage, and by rolling along and shooting bottles of liqueur, it is possible to yet more information to throw Capone in the slammer. With first aid kits to heal your wounds, dodging the gangsters shots is crucial, as is dealing out your own sentence of death.

Whilst on the way to the railway station, a group of mobster lurk within the shadows of the alley. With only a pump-action shotgun to aid you, a

desperate battle through eight different alleys must be fought before finally reaching the Chicago train station.

Ducking and diving between the buildings is the key to this level, and being up against the clock, there is no time to waste.

In the lobby, you notice that Capone's accountant walks in with a number of henchmen guarding him. As in the film, you have to guide a falling pram to the bottom of the flight of stairs without damaging the baby wrapped up inside.

Making your way to the platform where the train stands, a henchmen grabs the nearby accountant and threatens to shoot him. Only a single bullet in your pistol remains, so an accurate shot is needed. Firing the bullet at his head is critical, otherwise it's the end of the road for the accountant. Once you have captured the accountant, Capone will be taken to court where he will be tried and sentenced, but the crimelord's chief hitman is still at

STEVE

Whilst The Untouchables is a well-presented selection of different game styles, I felt that it lacked that vital spark to keep me playing. Each of the stages has been well thought out, and looks and sounds good, but a couple of sections - the alley shoot-out being one - came over as a little weak and disappointing. However, that said, The Untouchables features a long-term task which will keep most hardened gamers more than happy, and, consequently, is probably worth a look.

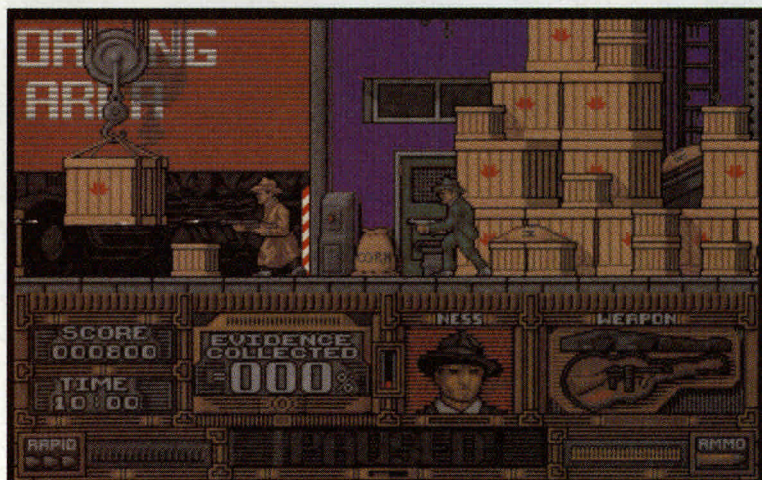
DOUG

With the excellent graphics and good selection of levels of different styles, The Untouchables is a must. Unlike most film tie-ins the game doesn't rely on its name to sell it, and a lot of hard work has been put into it. Sean Connery got an Oscar for his part in The Untouchables, and Ocean should get one for theirs.

SOUND

A number of tunes and spot sound effects which improve the atmosphere of the game no end.

70%



■ Behind the crates lurks an army of Capone's henchmen, who leap out from behind cover and open fire. Ten bookkeepers are also to be found, but these are armed with deadly shotguns.

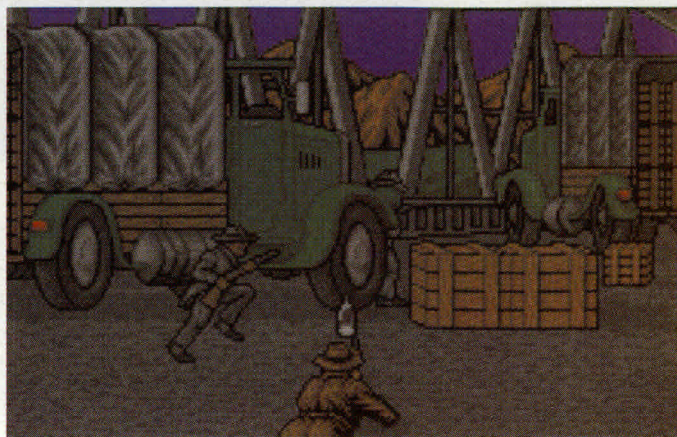
■ A ledger that contains evidence against Al Capone is left scattered on the floor after you have eliminated one of his bookkeepers.



■ (Below) Bottles of liquor are placed around the screen, and to collect each bottle you have to shoot it. First-aid kits can also be found which boost your energy, giving you more of a chance to collect every bottle.



■ The border raid takes place on a nearby bridge, which is riddled with mobsters by the lorry-load. Shoot them with your gun before they get you, otherwise Capone will escape unharmed.



large. A lone sniper hides on the nearby rooftops, and as you approach he opens fire. Climbing on top of the roof, Ness has to repeatedly hit Frank Nitty, when after a few well-placed shots, he will fall to his death and Capone can be arrested for tax evasion.

OVERALL RATING

77%

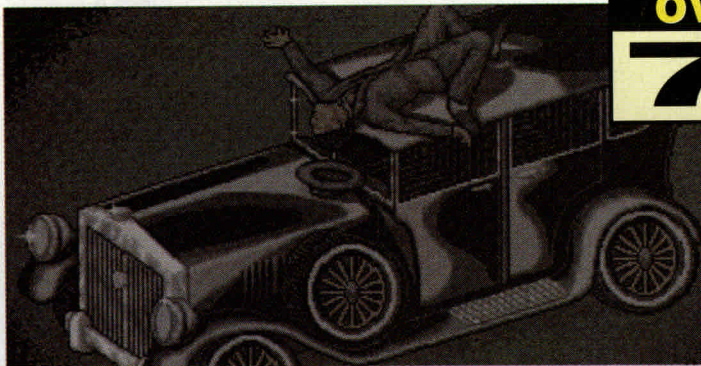
ALEX

Having seen the film and totally enjoyed it, I was looking forward to the release of the Untouchables. Once again, Ocean have come up with a decent film tie-in, which shows that good games can come from a good film. With colourful graphics and slick scrolling, the Untouchables is bound to impress, and the difficulty level is just right to keep you coming back for more.

GRAPHICS

Colourful graphics with smoothly animated characters. Scrolling jerks when the screen becomes cluttered, though.

76%



■ (Below, right & above) Whilst standing outside the courts, Frank Nitty, Capone's head hitman opens fire on the Untouchables. As Ness, you race up to the roof-top where Nitty will be waiting for you. As you progressively hit Nitty, he will stagger back toward the edge of the building where he will eventually plummet to his death, landing on top of a nearby car.



■ Level three sees our heroes ducking and diving behind the buildings for cover and to reload, before they jump around the corner and blast the awaiting gangsters.



■ A single henchmen holds a gun up against his hostage's head, so to disable him before he kills the accountant, you have but a single bullet to shoot him through the head.

■ A baby lies crying in its pram, and as it rolls down the stairs you have to guide it to safety. If it collides with anything or sustains too many hits, the game will be over for you.



■ After battling through the first seven alleyways, a large man opens fire with his machine gun. He takes a heck of a lot of bullets before he lays down and dies.



GRAPHICS

Quite well drawn and very atmospheric, but not that many different pictures to actually see, with most of the locations having the same scenery.

50%

TEXT

Again, the text style is drawn in an atmospheric style, but I would much rather have preferred a smaller, neater text, than the large ugly one they've actually used in the game.

50%

DOUG

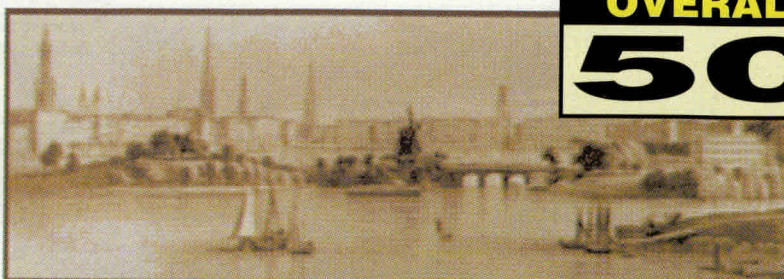
I must say that *Mystery of the Mummy* reminded me quite a bit of *The Hound of Shadow* with its Gothic appearance, but the gameplay is certainly very different, and there's not much of it. For an adventure the icons aren't very user friendly and they don't give you that many options - making for a very limited and frustrating parser. I'm afraid I can't recommend this to anyone.

ALEX

Rainbow Arts have now ventured into the world of icon-driven adventures, with digitised graphics to enhance the atmosphere. I didn't really think a lot of *Mystery of the Mummy*: It was atmospheric but, on the other hand, quite dull. It would have helped if the icons should have been bolder, and if the game was more user friendly. Nevertheless, *Mystery of the Mummy* is a brave attempt, even though it doesn't quite hit the mark.

OVERALL RATING

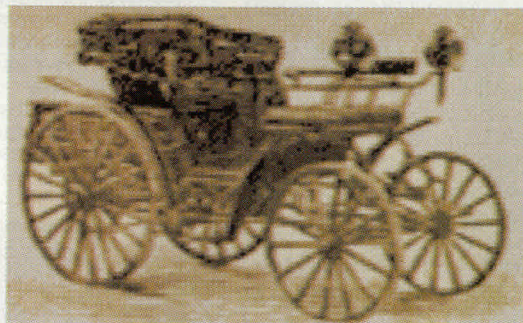
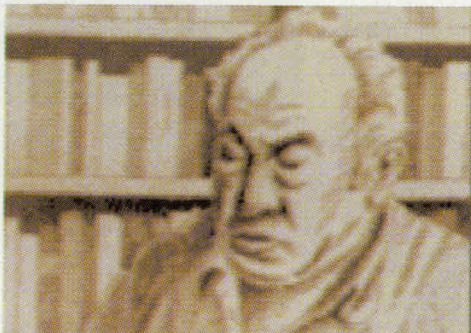
50%



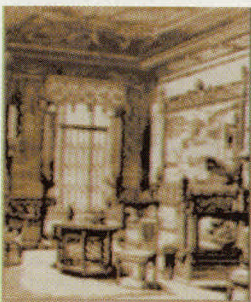
It is the 14th of April 1912, a sunny Sunday morning. We are at the 'Inter Hotel' in Hamburg, where the most important port of the German empire lies.

■ With a nice little picture at the top of the screen the game gives a bit of background behind the game, and maybe even a few clues if you look hard enough.

■ Mr. Rosenberg is the man who's paying you the money, and he wants to know everything you find out, so you'd better start working.



■ Jumping into your trusty car you begin to choose a destination, but with so many places and so few clues it looks like you're going to be in for a very long and tedious process.



■ Back in your comfortable hotel room you jump into bed and get some much-needed sleep. But don't sleep too long or you might miss some important clues.



■ Running all over the place without stopping for any food can be quite dangerous, but would this really happen in real life? No, I don't think so.



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MYSTERY OF THE MUMMY

Starting from the hotel you are staying at, you and your devoted companion, Wilhelm, must find out various pieces of information from the selection of people scattered around Hamburg and solve the weird goings-on behind Rosenberg's mummy. Everything is controlled via the mouse, and the only times you have to touch the keyboard are when typing in a telephone number or the number of the house you are going to.

Unlike most other adventures, *Mystery of the Mummy* requires you to perform the everyday activities of eating and sleeping, and refuelling your

car when you need to. Although these tasks can be dealt with quite easily, the main problem that occurs is money: there just never seems to be enough of it. *Mystery of the Mummy* is very similar to *The Hound of Shadow*, in that the game seems to be based a little bit around the RPG game, *Cthulhu*, with all of the pictures being drawn in typical Gothic manner.

Many characters will have to be interacted with during the game, and if you ask the right questions, various pieces of information can be ascertained about the mummy, and if the information sounds correct, you

can jot it down in your note pad. This will be especially handy at the end of the game when you will be visited by Commissioner Vantkin. At six o'clock on Thursday evening Commissioner Vantkin will ask you sixteen questions about the case which you must answer correctly. These questions will require you to produce statements, objects, and names that have been uncovered during your investigation, and if all of these are answered to Commissioner Vantkin's satisfaction then the mystery will be solved.

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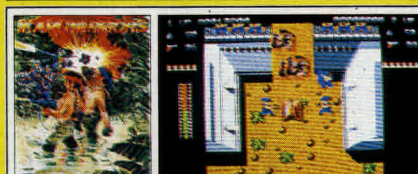
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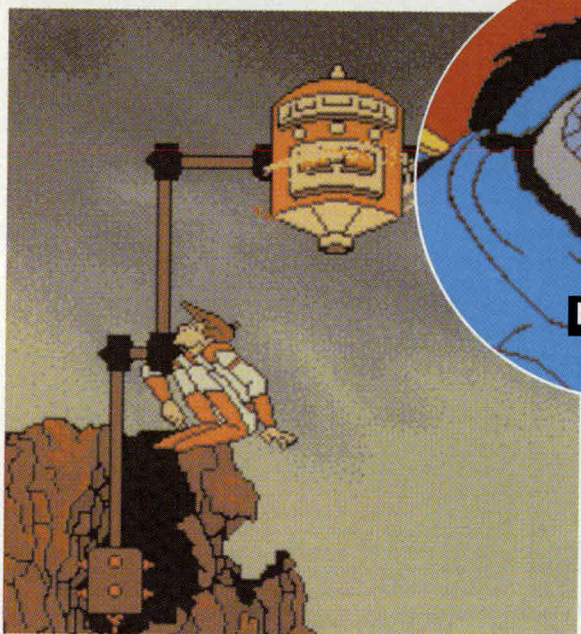
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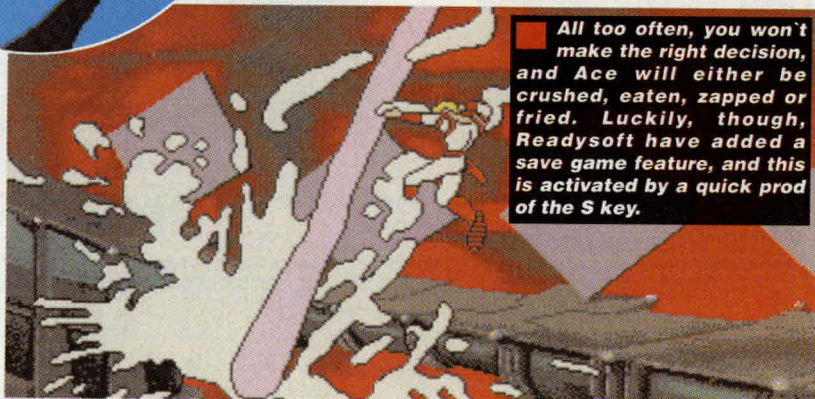


■ The story begins with Kimberley and Ace taking a recon around the area surrounding Borf's ship. Kimberley falls into a trap, though, and Ace is on the wrong end of a bolt from the Infanto Ray. Who can save Earth now?

■ For protection, Borf has surrounded his base with all manner of strange machines and creatures. Whilst the machines are mining the planet for valuable minerals for more Infanto Rays, the creatures are simply out for a meal - and both prove extremely deadly.



■ The key to completing Space Ace is pressing the right key at the right time. Here we see Ace about to get buried alive by Borf's mining machine. With careful leaps, though, he may just get to the other side.



■ All too often, you won't make the right decision, and Ace will either be crushed, eaten, zapped or fried. Luckily, though, Readysoft have added a save game feature, and this is activated by a quick prod of the S key.

STEVE

With all the promises of the same high-quality graphics of Dragon's Lair, but with better gameplay, I really thought we were in for a treat here. However, whilst the overall presentation has been improved (the jump between stages isn't as noticeable as in Dragon's Lair, and the screens don't repeat anymore), the gameplay is still limited to performing the right move at the right time - hardly the true cartoon interaction the packaging leads us to believe is there. Still, if you want to impress your parents or Granny, take a look. But for forty quid, I'd think very hard about whether they're really worth impressing.

READYSOFT £39.95

SPACE ACE

The story so far: The dastardly Commander Borf is whittling away Earth's defences with his dreaded Infanto Ray (TM). Created by the blue giant's devilish mind, the Infanto Ray (TM) is a high-powered laser, capable of reducing the IQ of anyone it hits to that of a young child. Borf's plan is to reduce the Earth leaders' mentality, and then seize control of the planet. However, Earth's last hope was despatched to Borf's alien-infested planet, in the vain

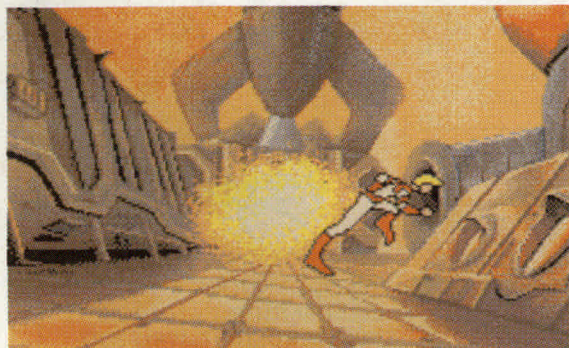
hope that the ray gun could be destroyed - hopefully, along with its creator. However, the best-laid plans of mice and men always go wrong, and as the two heroes, Kimberley and Space Ace, were picking their way across the craggy planet surface, Kimberley stumbled into one of Borf's pit traps, and Ace was hit in the shoulder by a stray blast from the Infanto Ray (TM). Luckily, though, the blast wasn't enough to fully incapacitate Ace, but with his

masculine figure reduced to that of an eleven-year-old schoolboy, rescuing Kimberley and taking revenge on Borf is going to be far from easy...

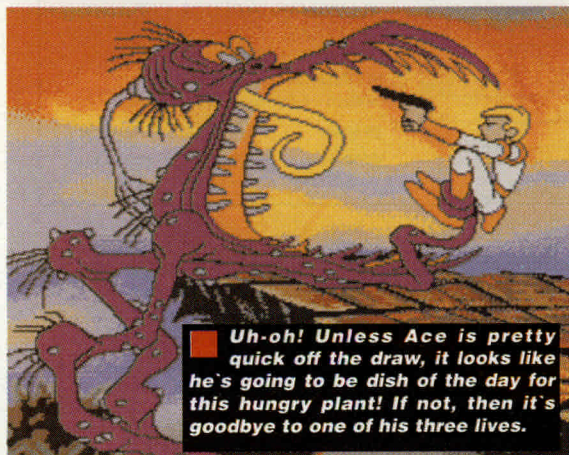
Featuring the same style of cartoon-quality graphics and sound that made Dragon's Lair such a visual and aural breath-taker, Space Ace is the second conversion of a Don Bluth video-disk game to hit the Amiga. The first game, the adventures of Dirk the Daring in the conversion of Dragon's Lair, was criticised for being a brilliant exercise in graphics, that had very little player participation. This time, however, Readysoft are confident that they have ironed out the gameplay problems, and they have also dropped the repeated 'mirror image' sections that featured so heavily in Dragon's Lair. However, the gameplay still doesn't allow the player full control over Space Ace and his weedy alter-ego, Dexter. Instead, he will follow a set pattern - normally to his death - unless you



■ Having located the whereabouts of Borf's ship, Ace snatches a small shuttle and prepares to land on one of its bays. Unfortunately, it seems that he forgot to slow down a little!



■ (Left) Ace bolts to the right, narrowly missing electrocution in the process, before eventually meeting Borf.



■ Uh-oh! Unless Ace is pretty quick off the draw, it looks like he's going to be dish of the day for this hungry plant! If not, then it's goodbye to one of his three lives.

choose to send him in another direction and, hopefully, to safety.

The game is spread over four disks, and Ace's adventures will see him make his way past the dangerous traps and creatures that comprise Borf's hideout security. Armed only with a laser and you to guide him, Ace must be moved through the thirty-three separate stages of the game, in an attempt to regain his old physique, rescue Kimberley and defeat Borf. Points are gained for every screen Ace/Dexter completes, and the scores are added on at the end of every few stages. In addition, Ace receives a bonus life every time he breaks the 10,000 point barrier.

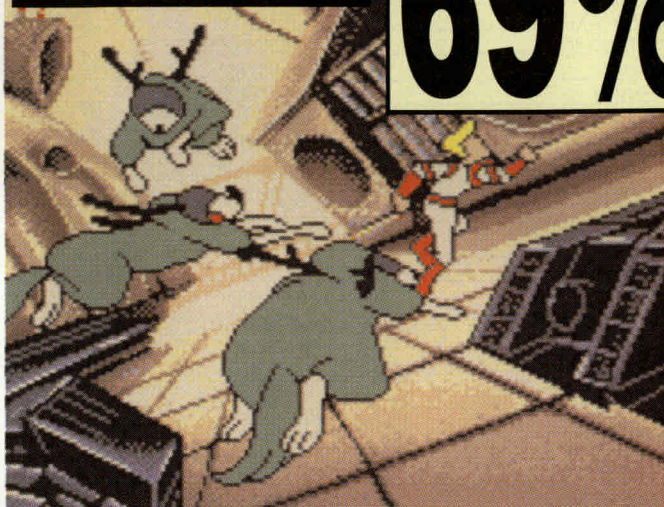
However, with deadly earth-crushing machines, laser-spitting robots, and the unwanted attentions of Borf's weird 'pets' aimed at him, it's going to be far from easy. The joystick or numeric cursor keys are used to control Ace, and the key to completing a stage is pressing the right key at the right time. Get the pattern

DOUG

Following close on the heels of Dragon's Lair, Space Ace has arrived, but with quite a few differences. Unlike Dragon's Lair the game only has four disks, and you also have the option of saving the game at various stages. Something I was glad to see was that Readysoft haven't taken each level, flipped the screen and made you play the same level again. Although Space Ace is slightly better than Dragon's Lair the game is still reliant on doing the right thing at the right time.

right, and access to the next stage is granted, and you may get home - and your revenge - after all!

■ Patrolling the maze-like corridors are Borf's 'pets' - mutated space dogs. Once they have got Ace's scent they never give up, and the only way our hero will escape being their daily meal is to outrun them.



■ (Above & right) Ace comes face to face with Borf, and in a battle that spans fourteen screens(!), the giant throws everything he has got at our plucky hero. Starting as a straightforward punch-up, the two enemies then engage in a fight to the death with sticks, martial arts and sheer brutality, before Borf flings himself at the Infanto Ray for the final show-down.



OVERALL RATING

69%

GRAPHICS

Quite simply brilliant! The graphics are, if anything, better than those in Dragon's Lair, with the jumps between each section being less noticeable, and the lack of repeated sections making for a more interesting game.

95%

SOUND

Ditto! Space Ace is full of crystal-clear speech synthesis, neat cartoon-style jingles, and superb sound effects. Each section is full of realistic sonics, ranging from the grunts of Borf's pets to the weedy small-talk of Dexter. Superb.

87%

ALEX

Space Ace, like Dragons Lair, has amazing graphics and brilliant sound, but sadly it is lacking in gameplay. A lot of the time the game relies on luck rather than skill, and therefore anyone can play it and succeed. I'm glad a save game option has been included as it would have otherwise be too hard to advance. Overall, I think Space Ace is a good game, but it should allow you to interact more, or have its price tag lowered.

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BLADE WARRIORTM



The beast was present in the land and from tower to tower the sorcerers voice called upon him. As night encroached and set the sun to flight, so his legions made ready to conceal the tablets that would see daylight banished forever.



So, as the same last bloody light drained from east to west, the paladin came forth, ready to do battle against the legions of the night, using all his might and skill in this tale of swords and sorcery.



Screenshots from Amiga version



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■ Okay, what should we do? Drown our sorrows in booze, or take a chance and blow our last dollar bill on a Luck-O-Buck-O Lottery ticket.



■ (Below) Yes Siree, if we are going on a romantic trip with the girl of our dreams, there are sure to be some little essentials we need from the Drug store. Know what I mean? Nudge! Nudge! "Erm, a packet of... er... a packet of... razor blades - yes, that's it... razor blades please (blush). Oh, a little something for the weekend. No, not a comb..."



■ Just produce the correct papers and you're off on the voyage of a lifetime. Of course, it's more than my job's worth to let you on without your passport. Give Ticket to Man then you will be allowed onboard ship. This will produce pretty picture of BARBIE BIMBO.



■ Gorgeous Barbie, and she's all yours. What nights of romance under a silver moon lie ahead for you. Will true love finally arrive for poor Larry?



■ KROD TV Studios. Home of the worst TV channel in L.A. Here is where they make the gut-wrenching 'Blind Date' Show. Still I don't suppose there's any woman crazy enough to pick you, Larry.

SIERRA-ON-LINE £24.99

LEISURE SUIT LARRY II

Look up 'NERD' in the dictionary and you'll probably find a picture of Leisure Suit Larry. Yes, Larry Laffer is back, and this time he's looking for love. Who knows,

perhaps this time he'll get lucky. A peep into the crystal ball reveals that he is going to win a holiday of a lifetime on a tropical island. And, if he plays his cards right, there is a chance that he will end up playing 'Hide the Onlunk' with a sexy, Spanish senorita!

ANDY

Being drunk with the power of the new system, the game designers included a few too many 'hands off' animation sequences in the game for my liking. I also would have preferred a bit more of the original Larry theme (i.e. less Miss "Right", more Miss "Right-Now!") Where's the smut gone? That being said, it's still a marvellous game and all the silly fun is still in there, alive and kicking.

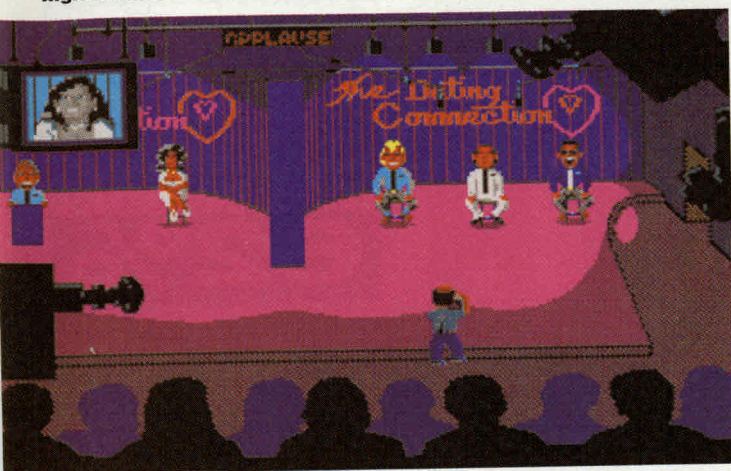
Thrown out on the streets by your girlfriend, you must tramp off into downtown Las Vegas and seek love all over again. Having only one dollar to your name, your options are few. Of course you could squander your entire wealth on a million-dollar lottery ticket; this could be your lucky day. If you make the right choices you will end up taking part in the American TV version of 'Blind Date'. 'Orl right Chuck?'. With the chance of winning a million bucks and the opportunity to sail off to the tropics with a sexy 'Barbie Bimbo', things couldn't be better.

Well, that's the good news.



■ The SS LOVEBOAT. Full steam for the warm waters of the Pacific and the even hotter water of Dr. Nonookee's island of intrigue.

■ **Okay Larry, give it your best shot. Convince Barbie Bimbo that you are the man of her dreams - instead of the nerd of her nightmares!**



The bad news is that you are about to become unwittingly entangled in the machinations of the evil genius - Dr. NONOOKEE. Secret agents, KGB men, and a sado-masochistic spinster are all hungry for your body, but not in the way you'd hoped. In a case of mistaken identity you are given the wrong parcel and Dr. Nonookee is not pleased. On the romantic front things are no better, because Barbie Bimbo has brought her mother along on the trip. Mumsie may be past her 'sell-by date', but she's got a cupboard full of chains and whips which she's eager to try out on your tender, young body.

The game is more like a spoof of a James Bond movie, than the sequel to the smutty original - 'Leisure Suit Larry in the Land of the Lounge Lizards'. Make the wrong decision in this game and it won't be a 'social deacease' you catch, but a bellyful of lead.

Larry is the kind of guy who attracts the wrong kind of attention. Dogs walk for blocks, just to find him and pee on his leg. He wins a million-dollar note and then finds he can't buy anything because no-one has any change. Still with a smooth guy like you to control his destiny, things are bound to get better..

This game is one of the new generation of Sierra adventures containing better sound, higher resolution graphics and many more animation sequences. The

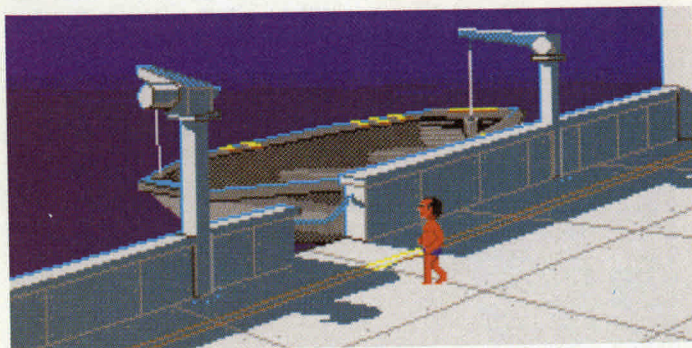
anti-piracy system consists of correctly comparing a drawing of a young 'lady' with that of a smudged drawing in the manual. Making the drawing difficult to Xerox also made it difficult to decipher. The result is that you're liable to curse long and loud each time you fail the test and have to reboot the workbench and the game.

Larry appears to have become fixated with barbers. In this game you will make frequent trips to the tonsorial parlour, where various young men attempt to repair the ravages of time with wigs, bleach and lacquer. At one point, things get so out of hand that Larry has to adopt the disguise of a gorgeous blonde. Of course it's just Larry's luck that this would be the one time in his life when somebody fancies him!

As Larry 'island hops' around the Pacific, he must evade the deadly advances of Nonookee's henchmen plus the attention of

STEVE

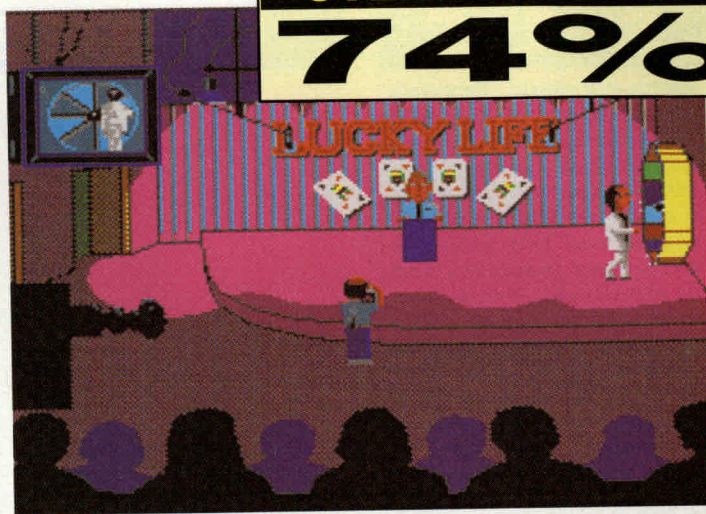
Although I'm not really an adventure buff, I am a great fan of Leisure Suit Larry and his bawdy exploits. The game's sense of humour appeals to me immensely, but what worries me is that I start to think as Larry would after a while - maybe I'm a closet weirdo! Besides the greatly enhanced graphics and backdrops, the gameplay in Larry has been improved, too. The puzzles aren't too taxing, but get the old grey cells clanking a bit and, overall, Larry II is well worth a look - especially if you enjoy Carry On-style humour.



■ **Well, if things get too hot onboard, this looks like one way to get out of trouble. Looks pretty difficult to get in the boat AND lower it at the same time.**

OVERALL RATING

74%



■ **Spin the wheel and who knows - the Million Dollar Lottery just might roll right into your life.**

GRAPHICS

The animation sequences are detailed and clever. The artwork is far removed from the original Larry game which now looks blocky and crude. Although it must be said that the girls in the original looked a lot more sexy!

79%

deadly tropical animals. There are rivers to cross, mountains to climb and tribal rituals to endure. Your reward for all this suffering will be a spectacular wedding sequence, which looks like an excerpt from a Hollywood musical.

SOUND

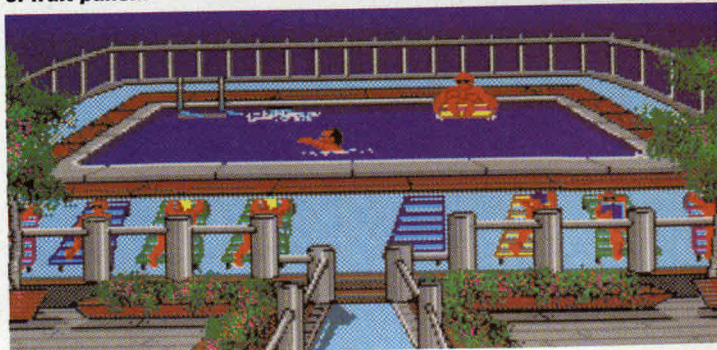
Again, things are much more sophisticated, and while the music sounds smoother it's still that catchy 'Larry Theme'. Sound-effects are included, but are not out of the ordinary.

70%

SK

Yet another helping from Sierra-On-Line. As with all of their efforts Sierra has produced a quality product. The graphics are excellent as is the gameplay; the sound is OK but nothing to write home about and the game is witty and amusing. It does however seem to have missing that little something extra that its predecessor had. Some of the animated sequences also go on for a little too long, breaking up the play of the game. Overall, it's a good game that doesn't quite measure up to its pedigree.

■ **This is the life. Grab a sunbed and let's get into some serious bikini-watching before we stroll off to the bar and another round of fruit punch.**



STEVE

Without a doubt, Dragon's Breath is one of the most original and refreshing game that I have ever played. Everything about it reeks of originality and style, and the game is extremely involving and compelling. From the moment starting hatching dragons and taking villages, I was hooked. In addition, because of the wide range of spells available, there are countless ways of achieving immortality, and that makes the game just that little bit more challenging. A superb game, and destined to be a classic.

PALACE £19.95

DRAGON'S BREATH

SOUND

Good soundtrack that complements the atmosphere; brilliant sound effects at key points in the game. In addition, there are lots of neat little touches.

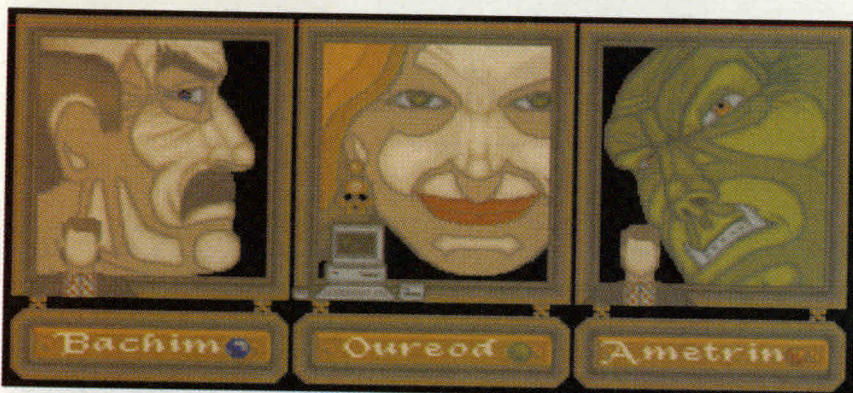
62%

With a swift beat of his powerful, leathery wings, Calgor rises above the mountain top and swoops down towards the village of Lupon. He views with keen interest the peasants reaction to seeing a dragon. On the ground below, large trebuchets launch boulders that narrowly miss the torso of the flying lizard. Upon

nearing the target, Calgor swoops down and inhales a deep breath, and with a swift blow, a spout of flame gushes from his mouth causing nearby huts to explode into a mass of writhing flames. Pulling the reins taught, Bachim halts the magnificent beast in mid flight and commands Calgor to show no mercy and to destroy the

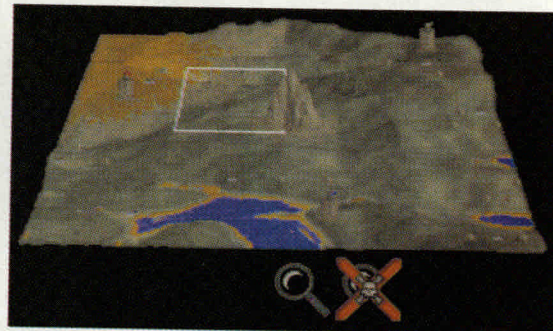
remains of the population, for today he shall rule the land of Anrea.

Anrea is the setting for this tale of mystical beasts - but friendly, they are not. Three Dragonmasters rule the realm, all with one thought in their minds: To find the three parts of the talisman, which will then enable them to open the gates to the

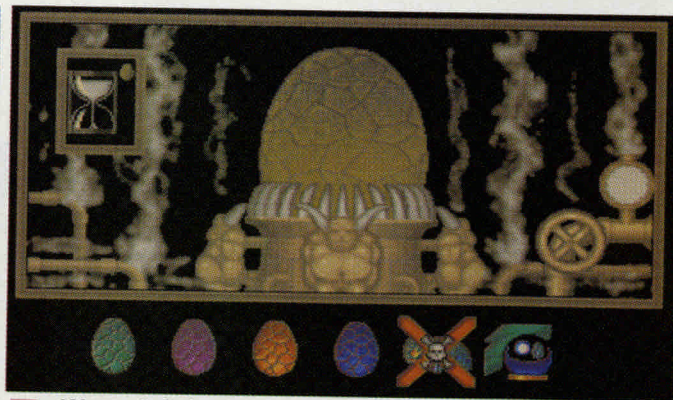


When playing Dragon's Breath, you don't have to be a human. There are three to choose from: Bachim the Alchemist, Oured the she-vampire and Ametrin the green beast.

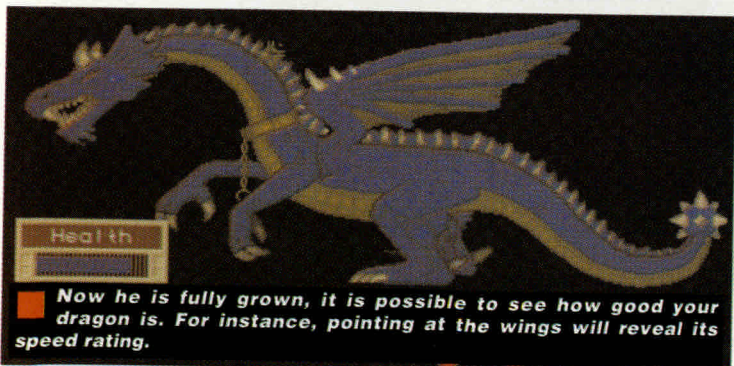
The land stretches out before you, and in the distance the enemy castles can barely be seen. The main menu screen offers the option to hatch new eggs or attack a town, as well as a number of other things.



Dragon's Breath is almost completely controlled by icons, with the exception of the arcade sequence. A view of your castle is shown when it is your go, so don't forget what your home looks like.



(Above & below) On top of the incubator rests a Dragon's egg. Using the wheel at the side to set the temperature, it is possible to time the egg to be hatched quickly, or on the other hand, slowly. The quicker you hatch the egg, the weaker the baby dragon will be. After a lengthy waiting process, the egg starts to crack and out pops the dragon, crying for its parents.



Now he is fully grown, it is possible to see how good your dragon is. For instance, pointing at the wings will reveal its speed rating.



GRAPHICS

Outstanding still shots of your home castle, with beautifully drawn maps and smoothly animated sprites. There has been no scrimping here, and it certainly shows.

73%

Great Castle which is said to hold the secret to immortality.

The parts are scattered throughout the land, and can only be found by a dragon. Once each segment has been located, it has to be transported to the gates before immortality can be achieved. A dragon must guard each bit, though, so at least three dragons have to be in play before

the task can be accomplished.

Eggs play an important part in the game, but being as tall as yourself, they're not much good for supper. Instead, they have to be placed over an incubator to hatch, thus providing you with another recruit for your dragon army. Casting a spell is more like a chemistry lesson, because you have to mix and match the substances according to the spell book, and then decide whether to use gadgets, such as a bunsen burner to heat them, or the cutter to slice up the ingredients. To begin with, only a few of the herbs are within your reach, but door-to-door salesmen are quick off the mark to sell anything from their somewhat limited stock.

The current situation is written down in a book for your viewing, and from this point, it is possible to tell how wealthy you are, whom is battling against whom and what

ALEX

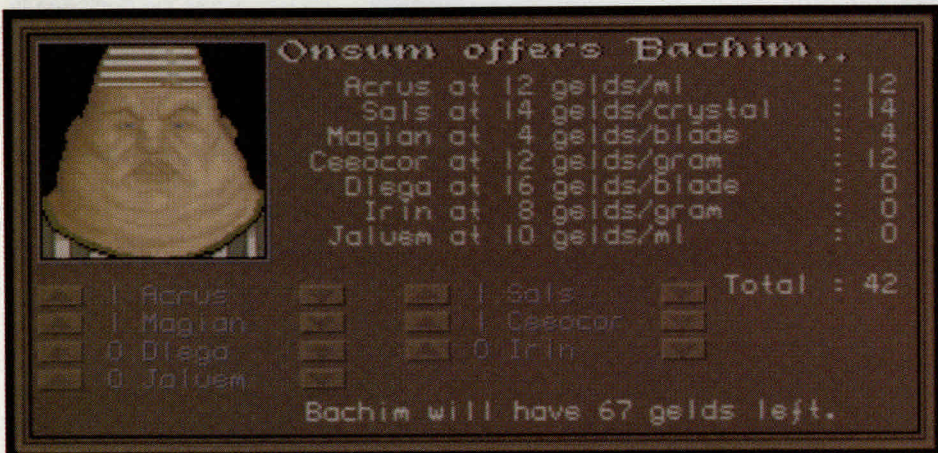
Dragon's Breath is a joy to play - I know I enjoyed every minute of it. Although the arcade sequence bears a great resemblance to Domark's Dragon Spirit, it doesn't let the game down at all. In a nutshell, Dragon's Breath should appeal to everyone, and it deserves to do well.

DOUG

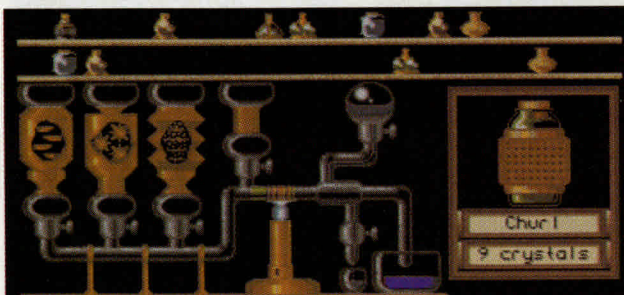
Dragon's Breath oozes atmosphere. the game's graphics complement the scenario wonderfully, and the eerie soundtrack and effects just add to the overall feel of the game. Despite a minor action sequence, which looked uncannily like Domark's Dragon Spirit, the game offers little for arcade fanatics. Still, for the more thoughtful RPG fans, like myself, Dragon's Breath represents a real challenge - brilliant!

spell ingredients you have. To gain money, you have to either raid a village or rescue a hostage. Money is needed to keep the eggs warm, and to keep the spell ingredient cupboard topped up. To top it all, a mini arcade sequence has been included to keep the shoot 'em-up freaks hooked. Finding yourself in a

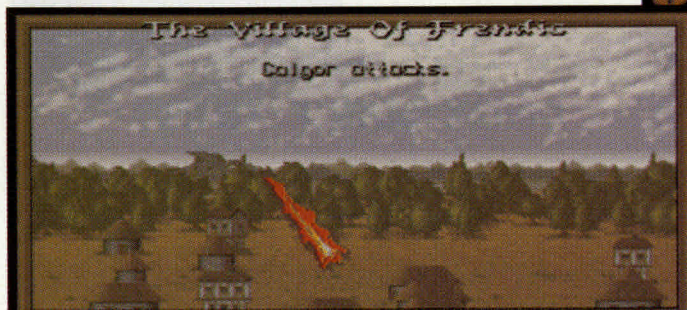
leading position may be comforting, but as the old saying goes, 'Don't count your dragons before they're hatched!'



Knocking at the door is a shady character who is desperately trying to sell you herbs and spices. Do you buy them now, or wait for the next person to stroll along?



Using your trusty bunsen burner and your ageing condenser, powerful spells must be created that can double the strength of your dragon, or bring the opposition to its knees by spreading a plague throughout their ranks.

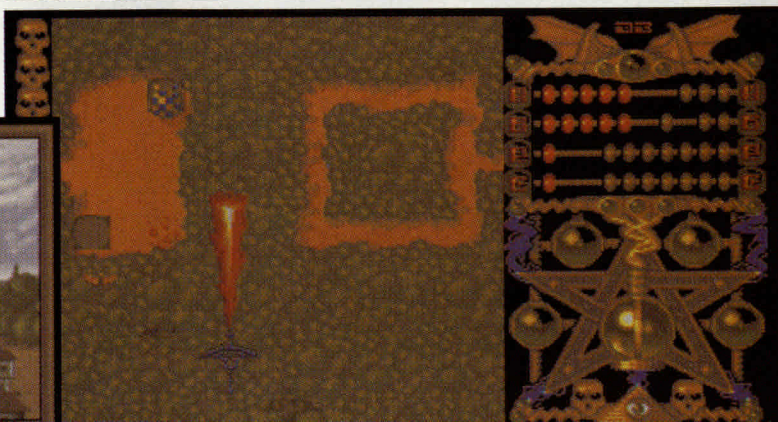
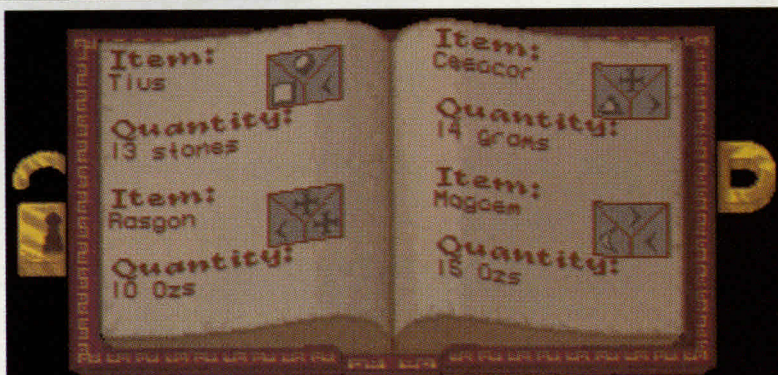


And two full moons appear in the sky.

The Dragons are Reviewed. Calgor prepares for battle.



(Below) Upon opening the accounts book, your financial status will be revealed. Every little thing you do costs money, so be careful how you plan your budget.



(Left & above) When the computer controls your attack, the view is side on, but when you decide to fly your dragon, you have to pick up the joystick and fly around avoiding incoming shots, as well as burning the unfortunate fellows below you.

GIVING THE GAME AWAY

Well here we are again, all a little bit depressed after the Christmas festivities with just nothing to do but mope around the office. Steve the Ed got so desperate for attention, he went and got a stupid haircut just so we could laugh at him - I mean, fancy having tramlines! He looks like he's going to duff up an old granny! Alex has got quite a bit to do, mainly because we gave him all our work, you know how it is; and as for me, well, I spend most of the day waiting for the pub to open. But enough of that, this month sees the solutions to quite a few games: It Came From The Desert is the first, and probably the best because I did it; Space Ace is next; and the solution to the arcade adventure, Time, is started this issue and will be continued in the following months. Enjoy!



TIME FIRST SOLUTION - EMPIRE

Although Time isn't the hardest game around it does have its awkward bits, so just to make life that little bit easier, here's the first part of the solution worked out by me, Doug the Jug.

As the game starts, walk into the barrier location and get the hammer. Use this to set off the alarm by the desk. This will get the Curator to leave his office so that you can get in to speak to the director. He will give you a shuttle pass and tell you to go and see a certain Dr. Delaney on Earth. Go to Earth and use the tube to get to the Seaworld Centre. Keep on speaking to the woman here until she gives you a rubber fish, then make for the park. Talk to Dr. Delaney's wife until she asks you whether you like cats. At this point give her the fish and she will let you inside the house. Talk to Dr. Delaney, and then step inside the time machine to go to the future. Once in the future talk to your best friend the Curator (he'll give the code for the first time machine, 04210503. Merlin's birth and death date).

See next page for the second part of this.



CHASE HQ - OCEAN

If you're having trouble keeping up with those tearaway criminals in Chase HQ, and don't seem to have enough of those turbos, then here's the cheat for you. As the level loads in, use the turbos several times to gain a few extra of those units. Thanks very much to Neil Catchlove of Eastleigh.



CRAZY CARS II - TITUS

Remembering which route to take can be quite hard, but thanks to Ian Melding, here's a list of the roads you are meant to take.

Stage 1: take road 15 on your right, then road 70 on your left and keep going.

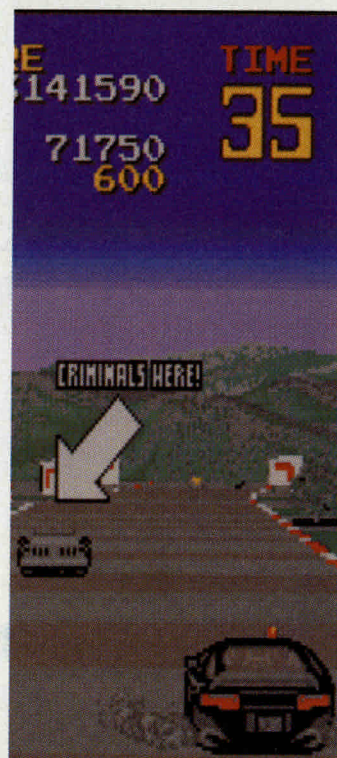
Stage 2: take road 191 to your right, then road 666 on the left, and then road 160 on your left and keep going.

Stage 3: take road 285 on the right and road 60 to your left.

Stage 4: take road 70 on the right, road 54 on your left, road 25 on your right, road 10 to the left, and, finally, road 180 on your right. Easy as pie.

PLATOON - OCEAN

Here's a bit of an old cheat that's been sent in by Eirik Bull-Hansen across the North Sea in Norway, but someone might not know it. While on the title screen simply type in the word "HAMBURGER", and now if you press the keys F1 to F4 you can skip to various levels in the game. But remember to press F5 first because this activates the cheat mode.



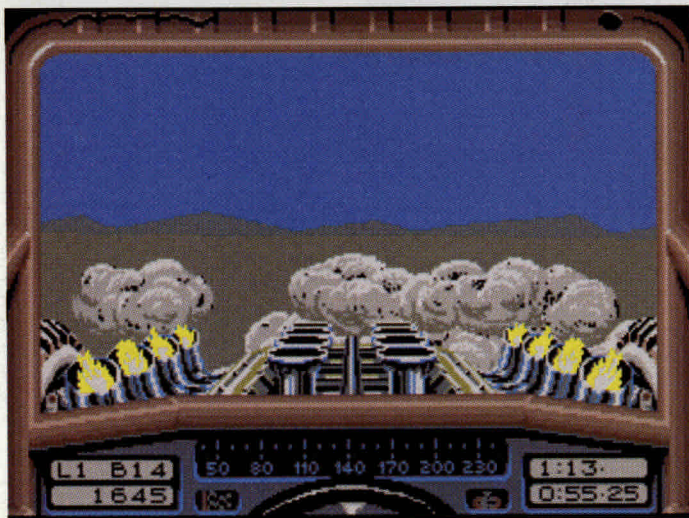
STUNT CAR RACER - MICROSTYLE

Getting to grips with this superb racer can be a bit tricky - but fun! So, as way of helping, we have put together a few tips that we have found particularly useful.

First of all, when you begin the race, don't waste your burners before you are placed on the track. However, as soon as your wheels touch the ground, press fire to spark them into life, and you'll tear ahead of your competitor. In addition, when the two of you are jostling for the lead, try not to ram into your opponent, because this only slows you down and plays havoc with your car's damage bar. It is better to get away scot-free and overtake him on a straight rather than smash your car up, as damage is incurred every time you land badly after a jump.

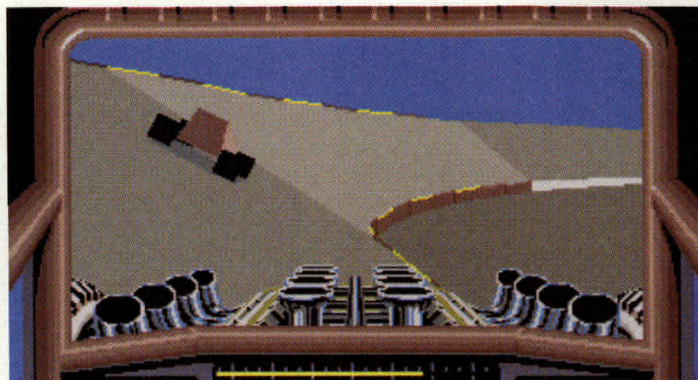
During a race, don't worry too much about running out of burners. There are plenty to begin with, so use them to get yourself a good lead. But if you start lagging behind, try to make up lost time by burning along the straight and - providing you are confident you won't fly off the edge of the track - even the corners. Sooner or later, the computer-controlled player is bound to come off, and hopefully you'll be close enough behind him to take the lead.

A bit of an obvious rule this, but still essential - PRACTICE! If you have a serial cable available, link up the game to a friend's computer - not only does it make the game twice as much fun, because your friend won't be as predictable as the computer opponent, but it will allow you to get used to the many tracks. Finally, don't panic if you miss-time a jump and end up in the gap between the two landing points. The game allows you to escape such problems by reversing the car and - hey presto! - you will be able to attempt the jump again.



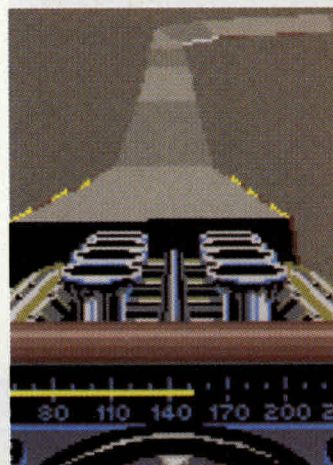
DALEY THOMPSON'S OLYMPIC CHALLENGE - OCEAN

If ever a game was written to wreck joysticks and forearms, this was the one! So, if you are having trouble with this knackered work-out, here's a much requested 'oldie but goldie' tippette. To begin each level with three full cans of Lucozade, get on to the high-score table, and instead of entering your name, type HINGSEN-J, followed by a quick prod of the DEL key. The high-score table will now be titles 'Demo', so type in -J again, which will change the title to 'Mega Demo'. Now restart the game, and press any of the F keys to choose an event to play with a full quota of Lucozade.



STORMLORD - HEWSON

Just to help you save those poor fairies, Tanek Mohamed Aday of Egypt has sent us this little corker. As the game starts to load, hold down the left mouse button and the joystick firebutton, and keep them held down until the game loads. Then when the game starts, pause it straight away and type in "MNBVC". This will give you infinite time and lives, and if you pause the game and press "L" you skip to the next level.



TIME FIRST SOLUTION PART 2 - EMPIRE

Go back to the Historisat, make your way to the Infirmary and talk to the Doctor until she gives you the thermometer. Take it and then use it to take your temperature. Attempt to give it back to her, and when she says your temperature's alright, go to the ladies toilet and use it there. Now when you give it back to the doc the thermometer will show your temperature as 99.9 and she will give you an injection so that you can get past the barrier in the viewport. Go to library 2 and speak to the woman in charge and then when she asks to you to go to the changing room and put on some clean clothes. Now when you go back she will change your clearance for the galleries. Go to the time machine in gallery three and enter the code that the curator from the future gave you and....

Well, you'll have to tune in next month to see what you have to do in the next part. Good luck!



OPERATION THUNDERBOLT - OCEAN

Here's a handy little tip for Operation Thunderbolt. Usually you have to shoot the equipment boxes to get the laser sight, but if you press F8 and fire at the same time on the title screen you will start a one-player game, and you automatically get the laser sight. If you wish for two players, then hold down F2 instead of F8 on the title screen. Cheers to Robert Bellemey of Herts for that one. Also as a little extra: type SPECCY MODE on the high score table.

AA HELPLINE ANNOUNCEMENT

If you are having problems with a game, whether it is a conversion, an RPG or whatever, then drop us a line and we'll do our best to help. Please remember to address all queries of this type to **The Amiga Action Helpline.**

GTGA: INDIANA JONES

This game is probably Lucasfilm's finest hour. Whether you are a fan of the film or not, it offers a challenging task, and is the perfect entry to adventuring. From within his woodland copse, the ever-wise Boggit has shown pity on all you struggling Indys out there and has prepared a full solution for you.



FIRST STEPS

Jones returns from a trip and first heads for the Gym where a few rounds in the ring will ensure he gets enough practice for the real thing later. Head for your classroom and make enough promises to escape your students and enter your lab. Pick up all the rubbish on your desk until you uncover the grail diary and can read it. Open the window and escape.

HENRY'S HOUSE

Once you've been briefed and returned to the University, travel to your father's house and pick up the painting in the bedroom. Push the bookcase beside the bedroom door to make it fall over and then pick up the sticky tape from the

back of it. Return to your lab and put the sticky tape in the jar on the shelf - this will reveal a key. Return to your father's house and remove the plant and cloth from the chest. Open it with the key and take the old book.



INSIDE CASTLE BRUNWALD

Make haste to Castle Brunwald and gain entry by giving dialogue lines 2.1.2 (where 1 is the first line, 2 the second etc.) to the servant.

The hallways of the castle are full of guards. There is no need to fight any of them as there is a way past each one. However, it is also possible to fight a way past a few, but remember, as your strength

will not recover between bouts this is not a good idea. The main trick is that each time you pass a guard you have already tricked, you must be wearing the clothes which you were wearing the first time you met him. (Find an empty room to change). You may also ignore many of the puzzles and still rescue your father. For example, there is a window upstairs which you can go out of and then enter another room from the outside, finding extra money.

Once in, go north and talk to drunk guard. Ask him if he'd like another drink and thus get his beer stein. Find the kitchen and fill the stein with beer. You can now put out the fire and pick up the roast meat once the steam disappears. Refill your stein.



THE CATACOMBS OF VENICE

Travel to Venice and enter library. Search the shelves until you find Hitler's book, MEIN KAMPF. Find the room with the red cordon and metal posts, and take both. Read the diary and note the pattern of the glass window. Find the room with this pattern. Refer again to the diary and it mentions the inscription (e.g. 'Second on the Left'. This would mean: read the inscription on the left pillar and note the second number). Walk to the floor slab with this number and use the metal post on it.

You will now be in a maze in the catacombs. Search the maze to find a skeleton with a metal hook for an arm. Take the arm and then find the exit ramp up to the

manhole. Go up to the restaurant above. Examine the wine bottle on the table and read the label. Once the diner realises that it's a lousy wine, you may take the bottle and return down the manhole. Head for the pool of water and fill the bottle. There is a room nearby with a torch on the wall. Operate the bottle on the torch to loosen it from the mud, then pull the torch to drop you through the floor. Walk right to find the bridge beneath a dripping wooden plug. Cross the bridge to read and note the inscriptions. Return to put the hook in the plug. Operate the whip on the hook to pull out the plug and drain the pool above. Walk left and find the ladder to return to the level above. Locate the now drained pool and cross it into a new tunnel on the right. In here is the old wooden machine. Operate the red cordon on the wheels then turn the handle to start it moving. Return to the drained pool and enter the new maze to find a room with large golden murals beside a closed door. Read the diary to see what murals must be displayed to open the door. Push the murals to fit the pattern and the door will open. Entering the door will lead you across a bridge to another closed door. Consult the diary to find the order in which the skulls should be pushed (i.e. skulls number left to right 1..6 - push skulls 53342).

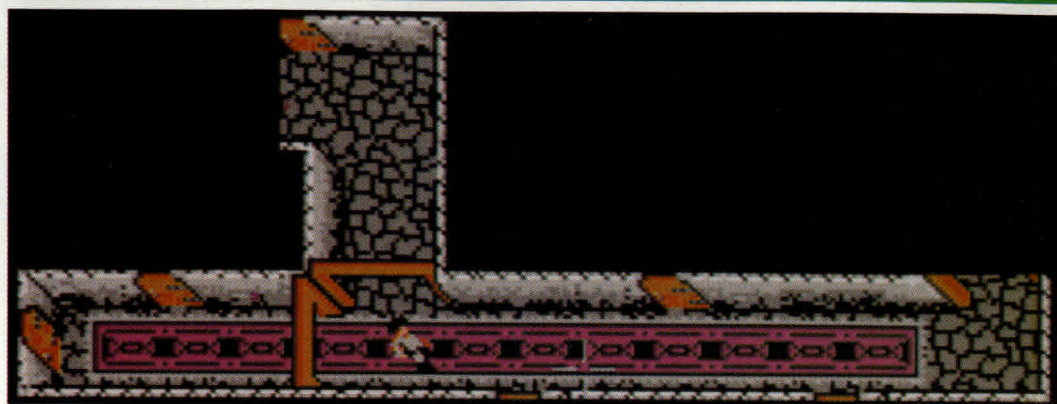
Cross the maze and enter room containing the crusader's casket. Open the casket and look inside. Walk to the rusty lock and open it. You are now free to return to the surface above.



AND THE LAST CRUSADE

STILL INSIDE CASTLE BRUNWALD

Return to the entrance hall, go right and then into a south corridor where there is a guard. Use dialogue 3.2.1. Find room with Crusader armour. Push the armour to make the axe fall and mark floor. Find the laundry and take servant's uniform. Return to entrance hall and change into servant's gear. Again go right and then head for second guard beside the stairs. Use dialogue 1.2.2. Once upstairs, follow the corridor to the carpeted left/right corridor and next guard. Offer painting to guard and then go right to find room with chest. Take uniform and examine it to find key. Head back to laundry (remembering to change in entrance hall). Use key to get Gestapo uniform then go back upstairs and change your clothes once more. You can now head for the control room and offer the guard a copy of Mein Kampf. You can deactivate the alarms by pouring the beer into the grating, but you can omit this if you like. Move towards the bottom of the next stairs and meet guard at. Dialogue 3.2.3 should deal with him, but you can fairly safely beat him up as there is a first-aid box in



the room nearby which will recover your strength afterwards. Climb the stairs and deal with next guard with dialogue 1.2.1. Enter Vogel's office and give the roast boar to the dog. Open the cabinet and take the pass. Take the trophy and return to the kitchen to fill it with beer. (Remember to change where needed).

Head back to the top floor and meet Biff the boxing champion. Offer him the trophy which he will drink and make himself an easy target for a fight. Find the final guard and use dialogue 3.2.3. Move to Henry's

cell and pull the wires above the door. Should the alarms sound and you're captured, offer the Gestapo the old book which will stop them taking the Grail Diary from you.

You will now be tied up with your father to chairs. Select Henry and Push Chair. By 'double-

clicking' on the chair itself you will be able to move 'right' to the crusader armour. Position the chairs above the mark on the floor then push the armour to cut the ropes. Push the statue on the left of the fireplace to open a passage which leads outside.



THE THREE TESTS

Time for the three tests. Heading north walk to the position shown in the diary and halt. To complete the Word of God, jump across the stones on the letters JEHOVA. Once the screen showing the crevasse appears for the final test, walk quickly, with no hesitation, across to the other side.

now ask you to choose a cup (remember the inscriptions?). Use 'WHAT IS' and point at cups. Look in the diary and make a match.



The final crusader will



ABOARD THE ZEPPELIN

If you have lost the diary you will head for Berlin to retrieve it. Give your pass to Hitler for his signature then head for the airport, showing your pass to sentries. At the airport buy tickets if you have money, otherwise get Henry to talk to man with newspaper while you steal his tickets. Once onboard the Zeppelin, hand over tickets then head for the piano player. While

Henry talks to the pianist you move into the radio cabin and open the cabinet. Smash the radio with the wrench. Put the wrench into the hole near the cabin and turn it to make the ladder appear. Climb the ladder and find the exit to the bi-plane. Survive the arcade section as long as possible then use the bluecar to drive to Iskenderun.

GTGA: IT CAME FROM THE

Lizard Breath was a nice quiet place, but that was before the meteor crashed out in the desert. Now all hell has broken loose. But not to fear, for with a little help from this playing guide, you too can save all of mankind.

THE PEOPLE OF LIZARD BREATH

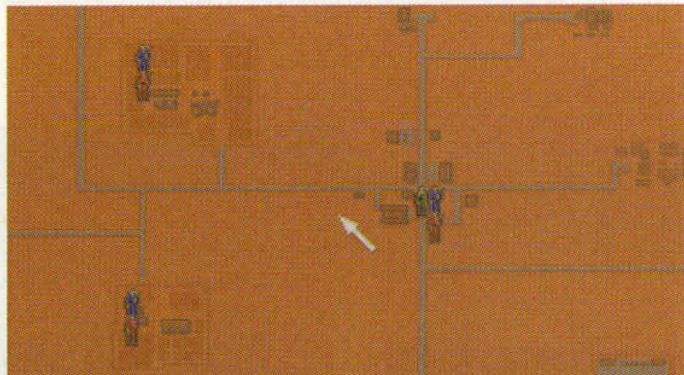
Although there are a lot of different people to meet in Lizard Breath, only a small portion of them are any use. Geez is the first person you'll meet in the game, and apart from giving you the first piece of evidence (the rock samples, and remember to ask him about his donkey to find out the rough position of the ant's nest), later on in the game he will also leave a marker on the ground for you to spot in one of Louie's planes pointing towards the ants nest. Dr. Wells at the lab will be a great help in the game, and all evidence should be taken to him for analysis. Once all the evidence has been collected, it's to the mayor's office, but don't take too long or the mayor will up



and leave the town to its fate. Most other people just add to the atmosphere and don't really help you.

THE IMPORTANT PLACES

Again, only a few of the places featured in the game will be useful, but most of them will have to be searched to find the various pieces of evidence and the whereabouts of the ant's nest.



The Universities Lab will be the most visited place because of Dr. Wells, and the bar should be visited every night before going to bed; but apart from these, nowhere else is essential.



ANNIHILATING THE ANTS

Fighting off the gigantic ants will be your main problem, but with a bit of accurate shooting you will drop the huge pests in no time. The ants' thick outer shells will prove just too tough for your bullets to penetrate, but they do have a weak point. If you shoot off both of the antennae on top of their head, they will be made immobile and just crash to the ground and cause no further problem. The best method to kill an ant is to shoot him as he struts back and forth in front of you; don't worry about wasting your shots because as long as you shoot off at least one of his antenna, you can simply shoot the other one when he comes in close

(just remember on which side of his head the remaining antenna is). Something I did notice, though, is when an ant walks off the left-hand side of the screen, by horizontally lining up your gun with its head and firing twice, the ant's antennae will always be hit, killing it easily.

It's not over yet. Just as you thought you were out of trouble the whole colony of ants come racing in for the kill, so delving into your pockets you pull out that handy supply of hand-grenades you brought along. There aren't really any real tips to killing the ants this way, but you will only have to kill a few of them before they decide to retreat into the hills.

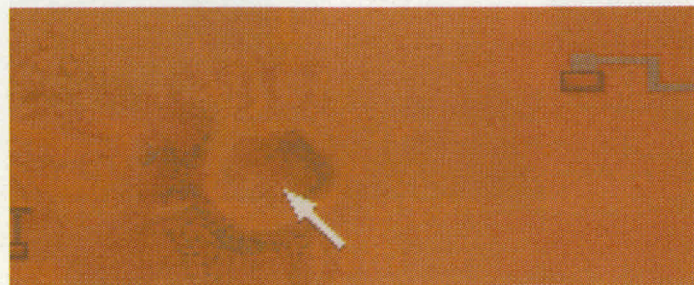


THE EVIDENCE

As shown in the instructions, you need to find four pieces of evidence. The parts and fluids can be picked up after a battle with the ants, but the other two will have to be got another way.

The tracks can usually be found by one of the cones, but you may have to take a few trips

up there before you find some (a trip a day). Lastly is the recording of the sounds the ants make, and until the sound recorder has been fitted to one of the planes, you can't get hold of this evidence; but as soon as you have all the evidence, get it to the lab, and then to the mayor.

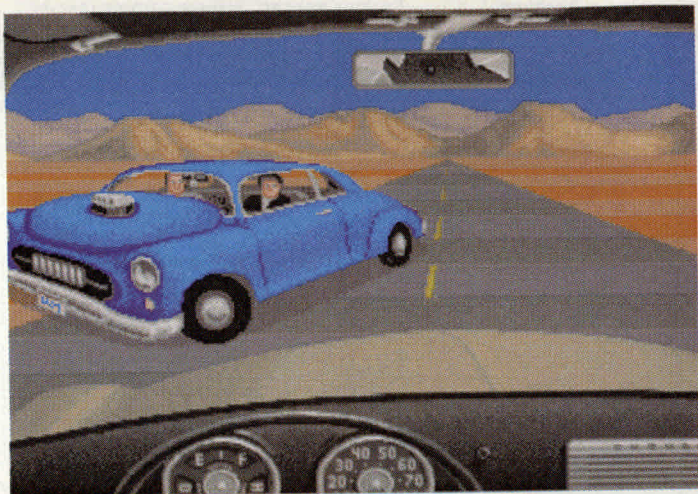


DESERT PLAYING GUIDE

FLYING THE PLANE

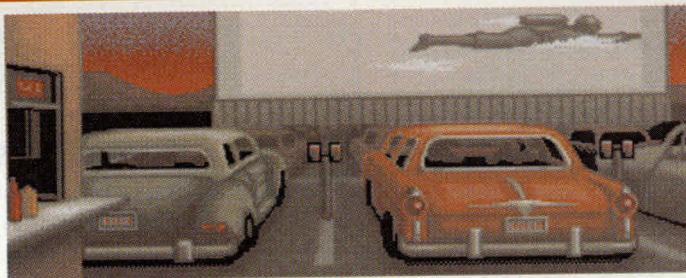


About five days after the start of the game, Louie, at the airstrip will get one of his planes equipped with a sound recorder and, as soon as he does, get over there, take to the skies in one of his planes and head for the area of the ants' nest (it's best to save the game before you go in search of the ants in case you crash or just don't find any). Once you've spotted them kill a few of them with the insecticide and make your way back to the airstrip with the new piece of evidence, thanks to the sound recorder.



PLAYING CHICKEN AND WINNING THE FINAL SHOWDOWN

At some time or another during the game you will come across Ice and his motley crew. Driving his so-called "low rod" he will give you a game of chicken, whether you like it or not. As he turns his car and comes racing towards you at top speed, just head straight for him, and before you crash he will lose his bottle, and swerve out of the way, but Ice's pride is hurt more than his car and he will challenge you to a rematch at the drive-in. When you arrive at the drive-in you'll find that, before you can do anything, about it, Ice will be running to attack, flick-knife at the ready. Not much skill is needed, though, and just the basic stab and swing moves will soon dispose of any threat that Ice presented.



HOSPITAL TROUBLE

Accidents will happen, and when they do it usually ends up with you in hospital. But rather than waste a day laying on your back when you could be out getting precious evidence, you should try and escape. The main tip for this section is never let yourself get sandwiched in a corridor; if you see someone coming, dive into a room with an empty bed and hide in the bed. As soon as the pursuer has come and gone, it's out of the bed and onwards to the lift. Use this same trick on the orderlies at the exit and you'll be home and free.

THE QUEEN'S NEST

When the ants start their main attack wave (around the ninth of the month) you can then start your search for the ants' nest. Good old Geez will have laid down a marker (an arrow made from stones) near the nest to give you

some help, and as soon as you know where this is you can make your way there to do battle. Even though you have the army's help at your disposal, don't bother putting any of them down there for it will be easier of foot, than in an

awkwardly-moving tank. As you follow the marker, with the ants in hot pursuit, another ant will burst forth from the ground leaving a hole for you to jump through that leads into the nest itself.

Now you're in the nest you must locate the Queen and set some timed explosives to blow up the whole nest complex. The Queen will be situated on a lower level of the nest, which can be entered by finding another hole similar to the one you just jumped down (but not left by an ant). Once in the lower level find the Queen and make a run for it, hoping you can remember your way back. Your only defence is a trusty flame-thrower with a limited supply of fuel, but there's more than enough to get you to the Queen and back. As soon as you've escaped the nest you will have won and saved the town of Lizard's Breath, or have you?



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THE AMAZING WIN A

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Do you never go to parties or discos because you'll ruin your favourite Smurf sweat-shirt?

You do! My God, you need help! And here we are to the rescue, along with practically every software company under the sun. We are offering ten lucky winners a complete set of games-related clothing, including trousers, hats, T-shirts, polo shirts, and badges. Sadly, none of the companies do game-related jeans or trainers, so you'll just have to make do with the ones you've got. Still, at least the top half will look half decent.

Each winner out of the hat will win a selection of 10 or so items. Thanks to the following for donating the gear on offer: **Hewson, Accolade, CDS, Domark, Anco, U.S. Gold, Ocean, Activision, Mirrorsoft, Gremlin, Elite, Thalamus, Audiogenic, Electronic Arts.**

OK, so here's what you do to have a bash at winning. To make a change from all of those boring Q&A compos, we have compiled a wordsearch. Hidden within this mind-bending puzzle, are the names of ten software companies. All you have to do is find them and list them - easy, huh! OK then, wise guy, here goes...

The names are hidden diagonally, horizontally and vertically, and some are even spelt sdrawkcab! All you have to do is find the hidden company names, jot them down on the entry form opposite and send it to our address to arrive no later than 15th April, 1990

Also, just for your delight, delectation and determined interest there are some hidden messages in the wordsearch - see how many you can find - no prizes for these though, mere simple-minded fun!

Good luck...



WIN! WIN! WIN! WIN!

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C	Z	L	Q	W	E	J	K	L	F	D	T	Y	O	O	I
O	D	O	M	A	R	K	Q	T	Y	M	G	S	A	A	O
R	Y	G	D	H	J	N	Q	V	X	E	R	P	L	J	K
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G	H	U	E	W	J	W	Q	I	R	X	M	H	G	F	E
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R	H	C	U	I	B	G	F	W	Q	E	D	I	N	M	O
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N	O	S	W	E	H	R	W	E	D	S	V	B	I	C	C
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Amiga Action compo rules

The Editor's decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into regarding competitions or the results of competitions. All prizes are offered believing them to be available. If, however, a prize is unavailable we reserve the right to substitute a prize of comparable value. No cash alternatives will be given. Results will be published as soon as possible and prizes despatched as quickly as possible. Please refrain from phoning regarding competition results or prize delivery. Employees of Gollner Publishing Ltd and companies participating in competitions are not eligible to enter.

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**Win A Wardrobe Compo,
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Amiga Action Wardrobe Competition Entry Form

I think that the ten companies hidden within the word square are:

- | | |
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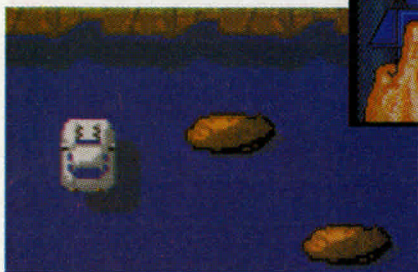
OVERALL RATING

61%

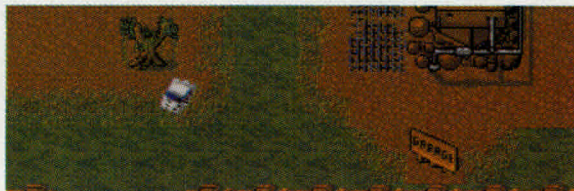


■ (Left & below) Extra provisions and ammo can be collected by entering one of the many shops that line the course. By coming to a halt on the shop's forecourt and pressing fire, you enter the shop, and then, providing you have the required cash, can stock up on anything ranging from missile launchers to helium-filled tyres!

■ (Below) James Bond has got nothing on you! If you come across a stretch of water, by reversing slightly and roaring towards it, it is possible to make it to the other side - the aforementioned helium tyres come in useful here!



■ (Below) The basic aim of the game is to reach the 'turn here' sign at the end of a stage, and make your way back. This can prove difficult against the ever-decreasing time-limit, though, so aim for completing the race rather than going shopping for extras.



■ (Left) Occasionally, you will encounter a fellow racer. Contact with your opponents, as with anything in the game, is deadly, but a quick burst from your gun will see them off!



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5TH GEAR

Converted from one of Hewson's 8-bit budget games, 5th Gear places the player in the seat of a high-powered car about to take part in an illegal - not to mention deadly - race against time. Your car is joystick controlled, with the directional controls prompting it to accelerate, reverse and steer the vehicle. And for those tricky moments, your car is armed with a powerful machinegun and a limited supply of ammunition which is activated by pressing the firebutton. You start each race with \$10,000 in your

pocket, a full fuel tank and several rounds of bullets. In addition, you are granted five 'lives' to see you safely around the course, but these are whittled away by collisions with the scenery or other cars, or by running out of fuel.

Each of the three races takes place over a vertically-scrolling level, with the time-limits getting tighter and tighter the further you get into the game. Your basic aim is to choose the correct route upscreen, reach a marker bearing the message 'turn here', and then retrace your steps

safely back to the starting/finishing line. Manage this, and you will be given a healthy cash bonus, and access to the next race. Dotted throughout the racecourse are several shops, and entering one of these allows you to top up your fuel or purchase extra equipment for your car. Amongst the things on offer are weapons, such as missile launchers and rapid-fire units, and items like helium tyres and turbo boosters, which improve your car's facilities.

GRAPHICS

Small but effective graphics move swiftly and smoothly against the well-drawn backdrop. There is a good use of shading as you roar through the canyon, too.

49%

SOUND

A nice title tune, but the ingame effects are decidedly dull. A few more spot effects and a racier tune would have helped.

50%

ALEX

5th Gear is by no means the perfect 16-bit game, but it offers playability of which I haven't experienced for quite a while. The gameplay isn't particularly taxing, and the tracks tend to become a bit monotonous, as well as over crowded but overall I quite enjoyed playing 5th Gear. However, the game does not have a lot to offer both visually and the depth of gameplay, and therefore I question the asking price of twenty quid.

STEVE

Despite the unimpressive 8-bit graphics, 5th Gear is a playable little game. The control of the car can prove initially tricky, but once you get used to it, the game starts to gel together. One problem I found, though, was that the courses never change, and once I had completed one, I simply had to repeat the procedure parrot-fashion to get to the next stage. This whittles away the game's lasting appeal, and when you consider this, 5th Gear doesn't warrant the price.



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RAINBOW ARTS £19.95

X-OUT

GRAPHICS

Nothing short of superb. Highly detailed and beautifully drawn sprites with silky-smooth scrolling.

85%

Total destructive power and vast quantities of energy-sapping aliens are not hard to come by these days: just go down to your local computer store. But now, Rainbow Arts have come up with the ultimate shoot 'em-up, called X Out.

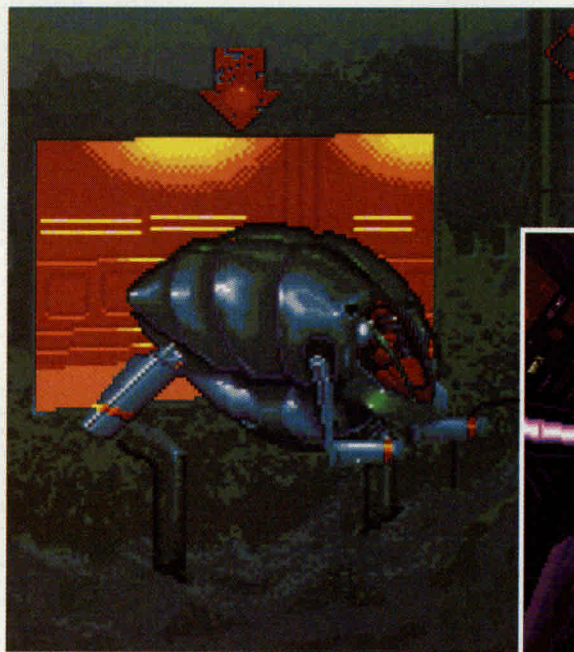
Last minute nerves creep over you and second thoughts about entering the cockpit of your aqua-sub flash through your mind. But millions of people are relying on you: it's either them, or you. Scrambling into the cockpit, you flick a few switches and pull a few levers, and the emergency lights flicker on. You can feel the power surging around the craft as you lower your visor. Over the communicator a voice wishes you well, then all falls silent. The thrusters power up and you are requested to enter the security code. After tapping out the number on the key-pad, the bay doors start to grind open, revealing a vast emptiness ahead. Taking control of the joystick, your craft judders forward and the doors close behind you. Now you are on your own.

Earth seems to have survived pretty damn well considering that aliens attack it nearly every month, but now they have gone aquatic and have set up shop at the bottom of the deep blue sea. Before you leave, you have to decide upon the number of ships to take with you, the power of each ship and the weapon it's armed with. This is done by using

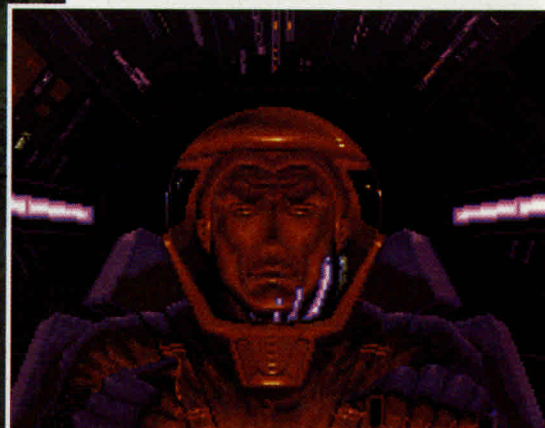
a limited supply of credits. For instance, you could have a single mega ship that is armed to the teeth with the latest in hi-tech weaponry, or you could have three scout craft with only a single laser to fire.

As you leave home base, all is quiet - but not for long. Wave upon wave of alien scum will come towards you, releasing bolts of plasma that will damage your ship beyond repair - but you don't care, you've got a triple-ported

turbo laser on the front of the ship, which will tear them apart as if they were paper. Each wave seems to be never-ending, but if they bleed, you can kill them. After fighting through hundreds of assorted extra-terrestrials



(Left and Below) No time for nerves now. As the lights flicker on, you hope for the best. The control panel flashes with more lights than a fairground, and as the docking bay doors open, you power up the bow-mounted turbo laser and rest your finger on the trigger. All is quiet now, but in a few minutes the place will be writhing with alien life-forms.



(Left) This monster-mounted menace may look well armoured and tough to beat, but after you have eliminated his riding beast, he is a weakling and can be disposed of with only a couple of shots.

STEVE

Brilliant! Just brilliant! I am a great fan of shoot'em-ups, and we haven't had a really decent one for ages. X Out has got everything a shoot'em-up fan like myself could ask for: extra weapons, attractive and vicious aliens, and massive end-of-level guardians. The game's presentation is slick, as is the relentless gameplay, and combined, these factors make X Out one of the best games I have seen for a long, long time.

With a wad of cash in your hand, you stroll into the store and place an order for your next ship. With a vast selection to choose from, you should be spoilt for choice.

The alien shopkeeper reminiscent (i.e. a blatant rip-off) of the ugly dude in Xenon II. Perhaps they're related?

Once a ship has been equipped, it can be stored for later use whilst you equip another - cash permitting.



Any additions to your ship are added using a simple icon system. The selected goods can then be placed around a blue-print of your ship on this mini-screen.

The alien trashcan. He eats anything you don't use - gutty sod!

ALEX

Blood Money must be the ultimate horizontal shoot 'em-up, but X Out is giving it a run for its money. X Out is a totally addictive game, and has that 'one more go appeal'. It is from easy to complete, so it sets a challenge to every games player, and I doubt very much that even the best shoot'em-up players will finish this quickly. Overall, X Out provides hours of enjoyment, even if you only want to relieve your tension on the hapless aliens.

you manage to penetrate their forces and they start sending the more powerful opponents at you. A man-like figure comes charging towards you on the back of a metallic sea horse. He certainly

looks menacing, but a few well-aimed shots should put him in his place. With only the end-of-level guardian left to destroy, you charge up your guns and aim for his weak spot. Blam... Blam...

(Right-hand sequence) A shoot 'em-up wouldn't be complete these days without an end-of-level guardian to do battle with. Taking up most of the screen and absolutely dwarfing your ship, it lobs bubbles at you which rapidly deplete your energy. By shooting his tentacles and then his head, he can be defeated.



In true R-Type style, there is a beam weapon to equip your ship with. By holding down the button and then releasing it, a burst of plasma comes shooting out.



(Above and below) The points that you are awarded as a bonus depend on the original craft selected. For example, the more weapons you have, the lower the bonus will be.



SOUND

Sound effects galore for everyone who loves the sound of pure plasma hitting an alien, as well as a main tune that feeds your appetite for destruction.

75%

Blam... Yeah, that's more like it, Alien cannon fodder. Lets see what else they have to satisfy my hunger for destruction!

DOUG

X Out takes the R-Type genre one step further. The graphics are first-rate and the game's sound effects are excellent. I particularly liked the way in which I could buy a range of different weapons and ships. As scrolling shoot'em-ups go, X Out is one of the finest and will keep arcade fanatics happy for ages. Definitely one on which to vent your frustration.

AMIGA ACTION

OVERALL RATING

81%



(Below) The backdrops vary with each level, and this time you are floating through a city. Derelict it may seem, but it is bound to house even more aliens.



OVERALL RATING

56%



(Above) Create your own player with the in-built custom team facility. Complexion, hair colour and style can be changed, as can the whole team and their personal statistics.

(Right) Violence never solved anything, but if you give in to the urge to use your fists, either a penalty or a free kick will be given to your somewhat unhappy victim.

The kick-off is viewed from the side, and charging towards your opponents will place you in a commanding position; but suddenly, the screen twists to a head-on view when it is possible to take a shot and, hopefully, score.



EMPIRE £19.95

GAZZA'S SUPER SOCCER

Paul 'Gazza' Gascoigne has now had a footie game released after his nickname, and boasts that it has tremendous realism. The main features include, heading, tackling, fouling and the unique 'boot-o-meter', allowing you change the speed,

direction and height of the ball's path. Full control over corner and goal kicks is included, as is the ability to create your own custom teams, with the strip of your choice. Not only does the game offer the chance to play against such greats as

ALEX

Against other games, such as Kick Off, Gazza's Super Soccer just doesn't score. The flick screen style is incredibly annoying, as is the sluggish control over your men. The 'Boot-o-meter' makes a change, but I am afraid it is not a welcome one. Overall, I think that Gazza's Super Soccer is a great let-down, and I personally didn't enjoy playing it at all.

GRAPHICS

The sprites are small and are sluggish when they run, lowering the whole feel of the game.

44%

SOUND

Weak spot sound effects feature throughout the game, with sampled speech at key moments.

48%

STEVE

I know that it is wrong to compare Gazza's Super Soccer to Kick Off, but Anco's superb footie game is the yardstick by which others are measured. And, unfortunately, Gazza's game has scored a bit of an own goal with its dual perspective feature and sluggish controls. On first sight, the game is promising, but then the characters start limping along at a snail's pace, and when the screen flips to show the goalmouth, it can prove very disorientating. There are plenty of nice touches in Super Soccer, but my overall impression was one of an attractive game ruined by slow speed and limited controls.

Liverpool, but you can also play against a friend. When out on the turf, control is over the player indicated with an arrow pointing at his head. From this little sprite, it is possible to score great goals that even the almighty Gazza would have been proud of.

Gazza's Super Soccer cares for everyone, with even a Scottish league for those not content with the normal first to fourth English leagues. Control is entirely through the joystick, both on and off of the pitch. Curling shots that go in the top corner of the net play a major part in this

game, and it is possible to produce this somewhat amazing shot using the one and only 'Boot-o-meter'. Each player has his own statistics, which rate the player on his skill level, speed and style of play. As you improve and begin to win most of the matches played, your team will improve with experience, therefore making it easier to beat the comparative beginners in the same league as you.



HAVE YOU THE RIGHT STUFF TO BE A FULL METAL PILOT?

FULL METAL PLANETE. 8:54 am. You will have to prove that you are the Cobra Steel Company's best pilot... Your mission : land your spaceship, get a maximum load of



In a previous campaign, this attack boat got stranded on a reef; now it is abandoned : "The ore goes first!"

ore, disintegrate or get hold of the precious equipment of the rival companies and, if possible, capture their own



The ultimate flood. Though a turret is destroyed, this space-ship of the TATOU Consortium manages to lift off.

spaceship bursting with ore. Under your command a whole steel armada : barges, attack boats, tanks (amongst them the famous T99 known as the "Big Heap"), transporter crabs and the unique "Weather Hen". This extraordinary machine, the technological pride and joy of Ludodelirium Motors & Co., is able to transform the ore into material. Not

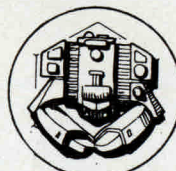


Isolated by the high tide, with its defenders neutralized, the "Delirium galaxy" may be your next victim.

only that, it also foreshadows the changing tides. On Full Metal Planete ignoring the rising tide means foolhardiness. How easily your attack boats could



get stuck or your tanks flooded in the next turn!



Free game piece enclosed!

It is imperative that you lift off before the Big Flood, announced for the 25th turn... Ground contact in 50 seconds. Welcome on Full Metal Planete! Action, fights, strategy and diplomacy in a fantastic Sci-Fi world where up to 4 players (humans and robots) affront each other in a thrilling competition.

The computer plays not only the part of a referee but also



A situation overview appears on the radar screen. Beware of threatening "Black Star"! What about an alliance?



The FULL METAL PLANETE'S pack mule is the barge which can transport ore and vehicles.

offers you adversaries who are always available : 6 robot-players each having their own character, but they are all programmed for a sole aim : beating you!

Furthermore this game contains a graphic tool to create your company's blazon and strategical problems for you to solve in order to get trained. A superb adaptation of the board game in the style of the games created by the Cobra Soft team : Bertrand Brocard and Roland Morla.



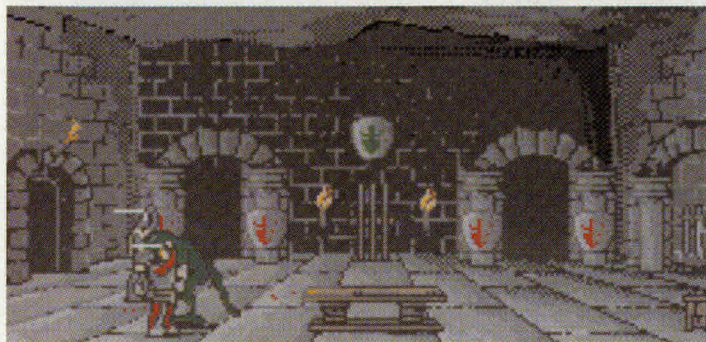
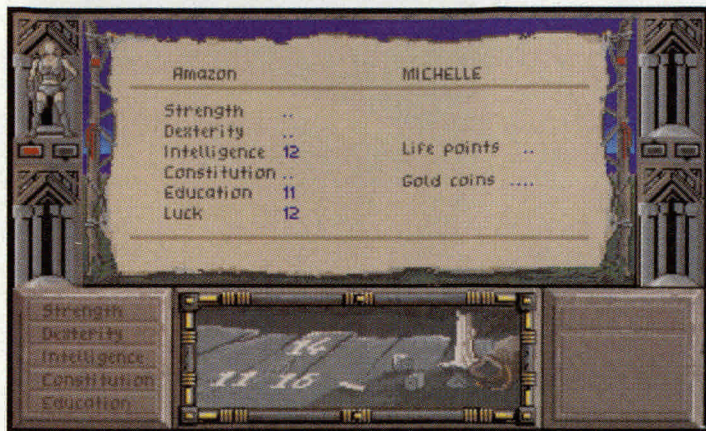
Stuck in the mud! This venturesome crab has been surprised by the flood and can only hope for the next low tide.

Available on ATARI ST & STE - AMIGA - PC COMPATIBLES

INFOGRAVES



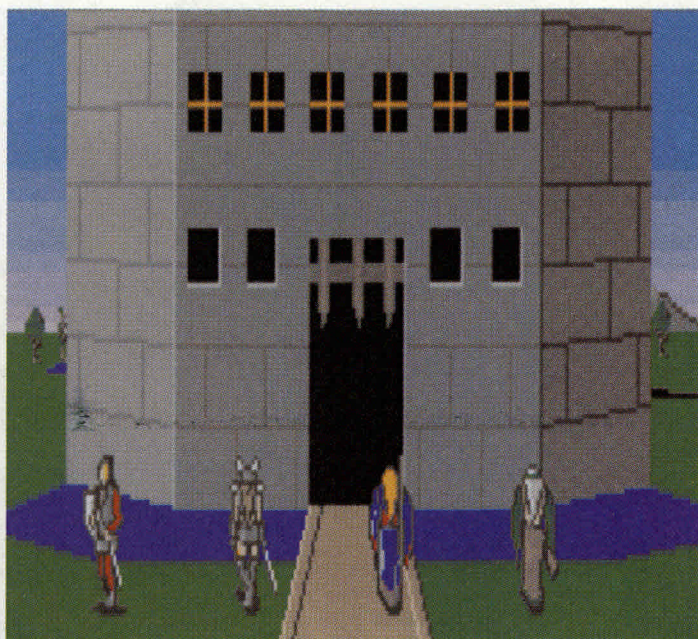
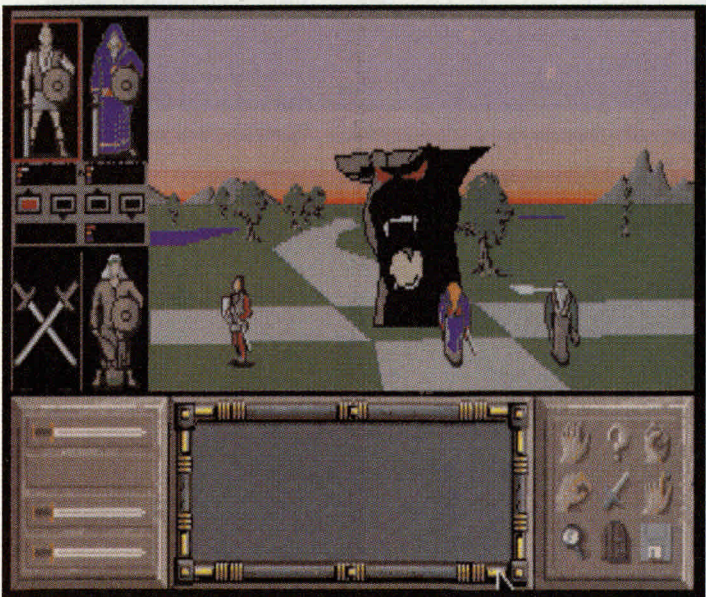
There are six skills in all, and the higher they are, the better the chances of your character surviving. Once all four characters have been generated, it's on with the game.



Great care has been taken in drawing the various rooms within the different castles, and nearly everything that can be seen can be interacted with.



(Above & below) Wandering through the wilderness can be a dangerous pastime for the party, what with all those rather nasty monsters around; but every now and then you come across a gravestone just sitting in the centre of a path, and it's not until you touch it, that its full power becomes apparent. Before your characters can do anything about it, a huge demon sprouts forth from the ground and attacks the party.



Still inexperienced, your characters come across a large castle. There's no telling what's inside, but before you can get in there you have to get past the shark in the moat.

INFOGRAMES £24.95

DRAKKHEN

Drakkhen is a pure RPG game and, unlike nearly all the other RPG games around, there are no arcade sequences, and instead of having to grab a joystick or carefully tell the computer what your characters are going to do in a fight, you simply select the attack icon and the characters do the rest. Thus: a character's abilities, such as dexterity and

intelligence, are important.

Generating characters within Drakkhen has been made incredibly easy and user friendly. Instead of inserting disk one, stick in disk two and a character-creation program will be loaded up. First of all you must choose the sex, class (magician, priest, scout, fighter or amazon) and, of course, the name your character will have. Then you will be given five numbers ranging from three to eighteen, and these will be given to your various attributes. If

ALEX

Adventures that amaze are hard to find these days, FTL's *Dungeon Master* being the greatest in my opinion. But now, with the release of *Drakkhen*, things are looking up for hardy adventurers who laugh in the face of dragons. The sheer size of *Drakkhen* makes it a joy to play, keeping you amused for hours searching every nook and cranny of the mystical realm. Overall, *Drakkhen* is a must for avid *Dungeoneers*, and also a good game to introduce you to the world of adventuring if you are a beginner.

ANDY

Drakkhen is certainly a very good RPG game. The dungeons and various castle interiors are very well presented, with superb graphics and most objects drawn on the screen being able to be interacted with. There is a large selection of different monsters, and items they possess, to find. The fighting sequences are good, but become a bit annoying when you keep on getting killed. If you're in to RPG, *Drakkhen* is well worth it.



■ **Stepping onto a flashing boundary, a huge dragon swoops down and attacks the party with his fiery breath. Unfortunately, the party doesn't stand a chance, especially as they are only novices when it comes to fighting, but there's always a next time.**

SOUND

Some very atmospheric wind noises, such as the wind blowing or birds screeching, and brilliant sword-clashing and grunting noises during the fights that you have.

72%

the selection of numbers is not to your liking, then you can ask for another five random numbers. The third choice of numbers are the ones your character gets, like it or not, so don't be too fussy about the previous numbers. Underneath or above each one of your character's pictures are three bars: a red, yellow and blue one. The red bar is your health, and depending on your constitution this bar can be high or low. The yellow bar indicates how much protection you have, and this bar will increase as you obtain various clothes and items. Last is the blue bar which stands for your magical power. All spells need magic points, and the more points you have, the more spells you will be able to cast before having to wait for your power to recharge.

In the lower right-hand side of the screen is the command zone and from here you keep control over the game. There are nine icons in all, and through these you can talk to or fight other people; pick up, use or look for objects; and open doors or save the game. The attack icon can be left activated all the time, so that when you encounter a creature, your characters will instantly rush for the kill. However, this isn't such a good idea if the person

GRAPHICS

Superb graphics in the wilderness that move amazingly fast, with even better graphics in the very detailed dungeons. A lot of different monsters to come across, all equally well drawn.

83%

you meet is on your side. In the lower left-hand side of the screen is the weapon/spell zone, and from here you choose whether a character will use a melee of spell attack forms - but spells are not only for killing; for a few spell points you can cure wounds on various party members, or even overcome poison and disease.

DOUG

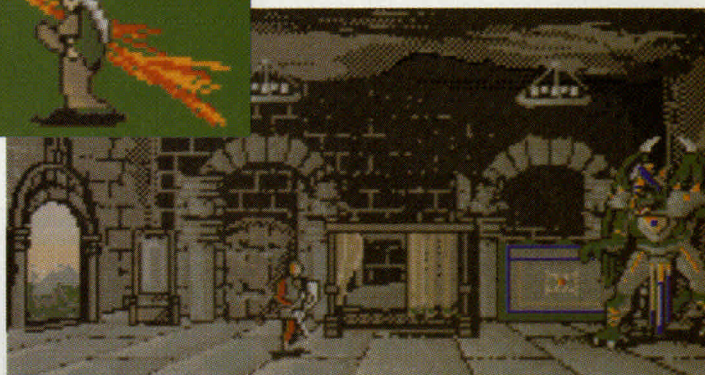
Drakkhen is probably the best RPG game I've ever played. The game is so close to AD&D in the workings that it's unreal, and it's not until you hear that Gary Gygax himself (the creator of D&D) was involved in part of the game's making that you realize how indepth it really is. My main problem was that I kept getting lost in the wilderness and being attacked by creatures ten times more powerful than my whole party, but with a bit of perseverance, this game will keep you going for quite a while.

AMIGA ACTION

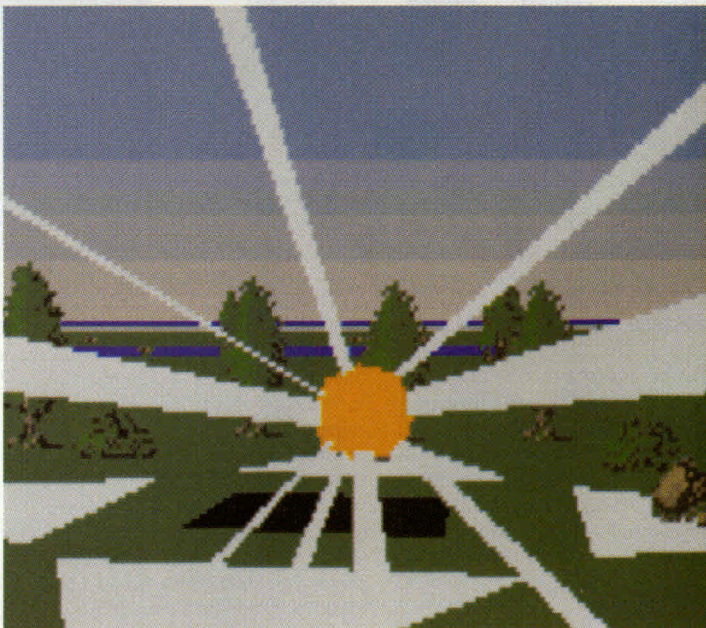
OVERALL RATING

82%

■ **(Below) After a lot of searching around, you enter a room only to be confronted the great Dragon Prince; but, pleading for mercy he lets you live, as long as you go on a special mission for him.**



■ **Money's the name of the game in Drakkhen, and once you've got some you can put it to good use. Inside the tavern much information can be bought, but at a high price.**



■ **Going to the Dragon Princess with news from her brother, you arrive only to find the whole place wrecked and the princess gone. The dragon Prince isn't going to be to pleased about this.**

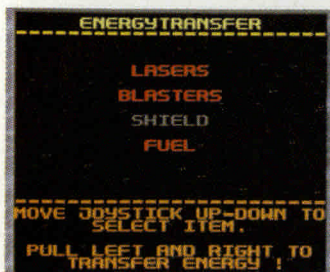
OVERALL RATING

55%

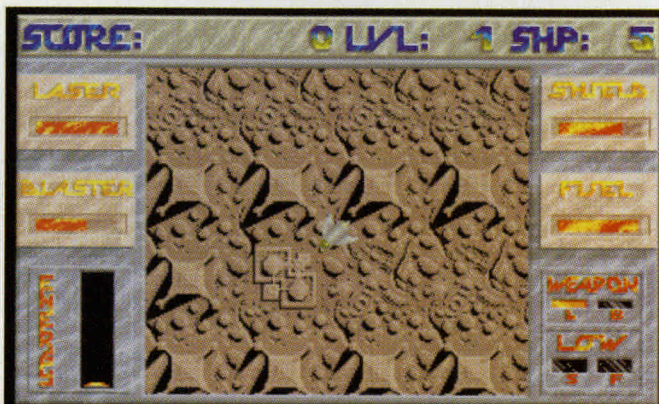


■ After disabling a ground target you hover above the damaged building and use your computer to probe the building's memory. Within just a few seconds you have a whole layout of the planet available for your imminent attack.

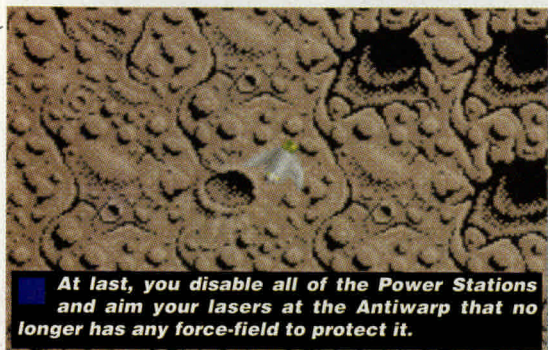
■ (Below) Getting your blasters at the ready, you prepare to dispose of one of the lethal Power Stations - but there's still another couple to go.



■ Running low on energy for your lasers, you decide that you can spare a bit of energy from your shields. Make sure you don't take many hits.



■ Flying low across the landscape, a huge worm erupts from the ground and attacks your ship. Quite a few of these creatures inhabit the planet, so care will have to be taken.



■ At last, you disable all of the Power Stations and aim your lasers at the Antiwarp that no longer has any force-field to protect it.



GRANDSLAM £19.95

WARP

Kelly couldn't stop laughing as he sped away from earth with the latest space fighter under his control, The Sunburst. That was until he saw the outline of a huge force-field around his home planet, Earth. Somehow the evil Myrons had managed to turn a defensive force-field into a death trap that would cook the Earth's inhabitants in the heat from their own planet. With no fighters being able to leave the planet, Kelly was Earth's only hope.

You take the role of Kelly in the stolen Sunburst, and with just the craft's capabilities to help you overcome the Myron

fleet. Each planet you arrive at will have a number of Power Stations. These power a force-field that protect an Antiwarp generator from attack, which in turn stops you from using your hyper drive to reach the next planet; so all of the Power Stations, and then the Antiwarp, must be destroyed before you can progress to the next level. Once you activate your hyper drive, you must then guide your ship down a warp tunnel to arrive at your appointed destination.

The Sunburst has two main weapons: a light laser for killing most of the enemies you will

encounter, and a powerful blaster for destroying the more armoured targets. The ship does not have an unlimited supply of energy for the lasers, so careful use of the fire button will be needed if you are to make the most of the small amount of energy you have.

However, your ship's shields and fuel are also made from this same energy, and if the going gets tough you can transfer some or all of the energy from these items into the laser; and the same applies if you run low on shields or fuel.

GRAPHICS

Quite a few colourful aliens that randomly appear now and then, but the rest of the graphics are a bit of a let-down with them all being of similar colour.

54%

SOUND

Some very boring and repetitive sound effects, and nothing really impressive on the music side either. Not the game's strong point.

50%

DOUG

Warp just doesn't seem to have what I want in a game. The graphics and sound are nothing to amaze you, and the game becomes very boring after just a few hour's play. The warp tunnel is virtually the same as the first level of the U.S. version of the aliens game and not that great. As far as I can see, Warp isn't the greatest game around and thus cannot be recommended.

ALEX

It's nice to play a different type of game every now and then, but I personally found Warp too repetitive for my liking. I found the graphics to be dull, and the sound not using the Amiga's capabilities to the full. The action repeats itself over and over again, with the exception of the short break when travelling to the next level. I feel that more could have been added to this otherwise good title, but as it stands it is a little bit too repetitive for my liking. Try before you buy.

INFOGRAMS INTO THE 90'S COMPETITION

Games galore this month as Top French software house Infogrames wish to toast in the new decade with a bumper giveaway. Top of the list is Infogrames latest release, Drakkhen, the eagerly awaited role-playing fantasy game.

During the 80's Infogrames have supplied the computer entertainment world with some of the most graphically advanced yet totally addictive games software.

Throughout the 90's we will be expecting a lot from this company who have a lot to live up to after their recent releases "North & South", "Tin Tin on the Moon", "Sim City" and classics such as "Purple Saturn Day", "Bobo in Stir Crazy" - not of course forgetting their smash hit "Captain Blood".

The first two prize winners will receive a pack of 18 classic Infogrames games (see panel below). Ten runners up will receive copies of Infogrames latest release Drakkhen.

Right, on with the questions. Shown below is the title of a well-known and much-loved magazine (ahem!). Also shown are a number of Infogrames-related questions. All you have to do is fill in the blanks, and send in the completed form by 31st March, 1990, to:

**Infogrames Compo, Amiga Action,
Gollner Publishing, Latham House,
Quarry Lane, Chichester,
West Sussex, PO19 2NY.**



THE PRIZES

Kult
Hostages
Tin-Tin
Drakkhen
North & South
Operation Neptune
Teenage Queen
Stir Crazy
Sim City
Captain Blood
Skrull
Quest for the Time Bird
Action Service
Purple Saturn Day
Wanted
Super Quintet
Iron Trackers
Chicago 30

The answers to the Infogrames competition are:

- ☐☐☐☐ **A** ☐☐☐☐ Game Based On A Seige Situation.
- ☐☐ **M** ☐☐☐☐ Quest For The What Bird?
- ☐☐ **I** ☐☐☐☐ Infogrames' favourite city.
- ☐☐☐☐ **G** ☐☐☐☐ The setting for a race game in the 30's.
- ☐☐☐☐ **A** ☐☐☐☐ Amiga or Service.
- ☐☐☐☐ **A** ☐☐☐☐ ... Wild West shoot'em-up.
- ☐☐☐☐ **C** ☐☐☐☐ ... Not ironmongers, but iron
- ☐☐☐☐ **T** Novel gallic RPG.
- ☐☐☐☐ **I** ☐☐☐☐ Mr Blood?
- ☐☐☐☐ **O** ☐☐☐☐ Name of the star in Stir Crazy.
- ☐☐☐☐ **N** ☐☐☐☐ Snowy's Master.

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Amiga Action Competition Rules

The Editor's decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into regarding competitions or the results of competitions. All prizes are offered believing them to be available. If, however, a prize is unavailable we reserve the right to substitute a prize of comparable value. No cash alternatives will be given. Results will be published as soon as possible and prizes despatched as quickly as possible. Please refrain from phoning regarding competition results or prize delivery. Employees of Gollner Publishing Ltd and companies participating in competitions are not eligible to enter.

LOGOTRON £19.99

BAD COMPANY

The Bad Company of the title are a mean bunch of gun-toting mercenaries, and assuming the role of one of these eight psychopaths, you have been sent by your anonymous corporate employer to wipe out whatever lifeforms you encounter on the four planets within the Nu-World zone. Once cleansed of their natural cultures, the giant company will then unscrupulously sell the planets to Earth's authorities who are desperately searching for new planets to colonize - still, if the money's right, what does it matter that you are committing genocide!

Written by Steve Bak, you can be sure that Bad Company is a massive exercise in death and destruction, only this time he leaves behind the Commando-style overhead view he has used with past games, such as Leatherneck and Dogs of War, and has opted for a 3D view reminiscent of the one used in Space Harrier. However, unlike in the aforementioned Elite conversion, your hero is restricted to running along the ground, and cannot take to the skies. One or two players can take part in Bad Company, and can work with or against each other in the pursuit of greed. The game begins with a selection screen from which all the information needed about the Company members can be found. Each of the eight killers have their

own characteristics and weaknesses, and these can either prove hazardous or an advantage in battle - for instance, one of the female warriors isn't particularly strong and thus cannot pick up the larger and deadlier weapons. But what she loses in power she makes up for in agility, and it is up to the player to work out which fighter is the most effective, or counter the character's weaknesses with the second player's warrior.

There are four planets to cleanse of life, and each has a different reward, depending on the hostility of the aliens who inhabit it. Once you have selected your battleground, there is a brief pause, and the warriors are deposited on the planet's surface by a massive space cruiser. From here, you are on your own, and, armed only with a pulse-laser, you push forward, annihilating any of the enemy groups that appear on the horizon. As you engage the enemy, another advantage over Space Harrier becomes apparent: instead of only moving forwards, you are given a free run of the screen, and can scroll it both backwards and forwards, as well as hide from enemy fire behind one of the many rocks or strange pillars that are dotted across the landscape. Along the way, extra weapons and energy can be collected, until you eventually come face to face with a massive guardian. A battle will ensue, and if you win, access to the next planet and your fee will be given.

ALEX

Bad Company is a game that seems to have had a lot put into it on the presentation side, but as far as the game itself goes, there's not much of it. Just walking forward across a Space Harrier-type landscape with little variety in the monsters that attack you soon becomes very boring. Bad Company isn't the greatest game I've ever played.

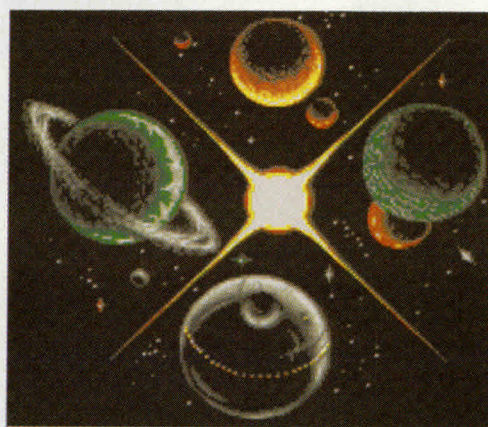
SOUND

An unoriginal David Whittaker track plays, and the blasting sounds during the game are no more than average. There are a few neat spot effects, though.

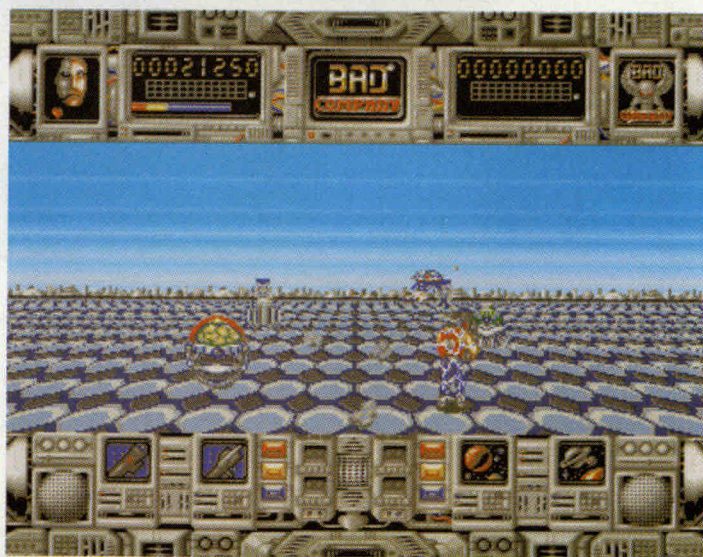
67%



Each member of the Bad Company team has his or her own weaknesses, and it is at the player's discretion to pick the warrior he feels will have the best chance at surviving. However, in the two-player game, the players can work together to make up for their team-mate's deficiencies, and vice versa.

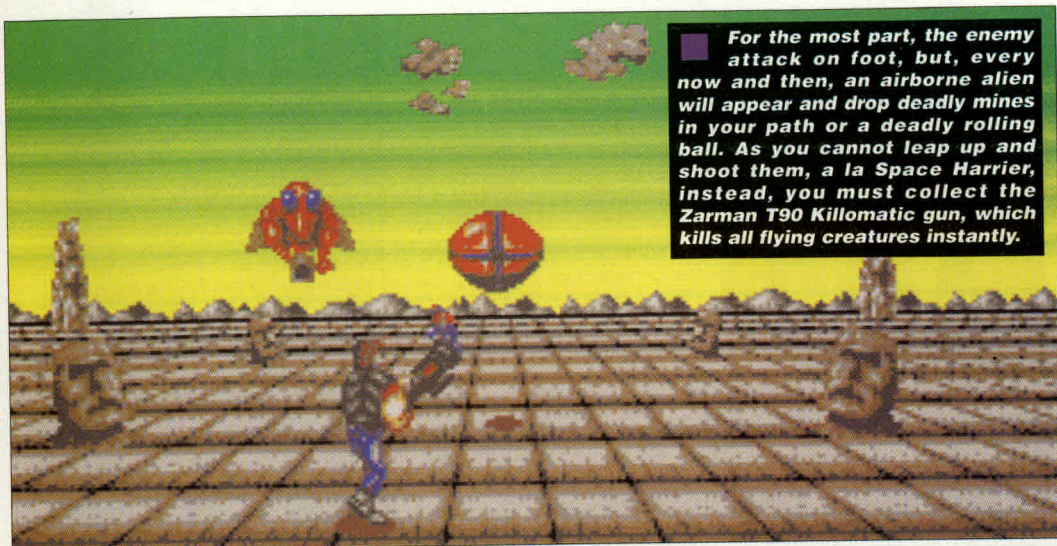


Once you have chosen your warrior, you are then taken to choose your playground. Each of the planets carries a considerable reward, and there is even a practice planet for novice fighters.



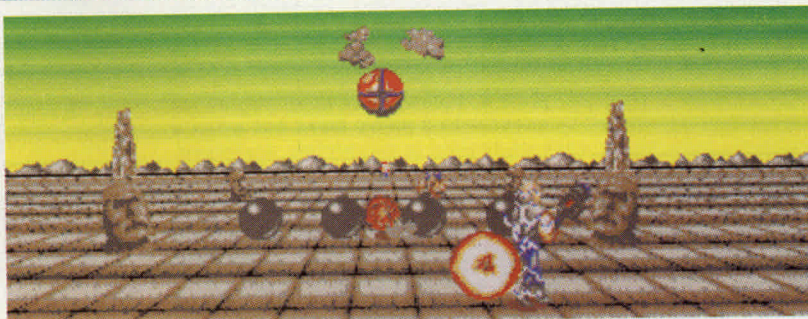
(Time & below) With every hit your character takes, his or her energy is reduced. A charge of electricity surrounding your body indicates a hit, and several can be sustained before a life is lost. In addition, flagging health can be boosted by using one of the life regenerators that pop up regularly, and are activated by standing in them.



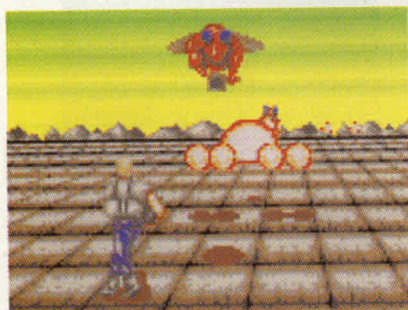


For the most part, the enemy attack on foot, but, every now and then, an airborne alien will appear and drop deadly mines in your path or a deadly rolling ball. As you cannot leap up and shoot them, a la Space Harrier, instead, you must collect the Zarman T90 Killomatic gun, which kills all flying creatures instantly.

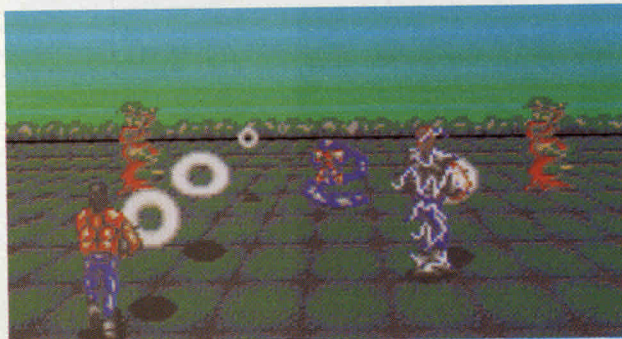
Extra weapons are gained by shooting the deadly pas-sphere that rolls at you. Once the sphere is destroyed, the weapon can be collected and added to your armoury. Pressing the space bar then swaps you between the two weapons.



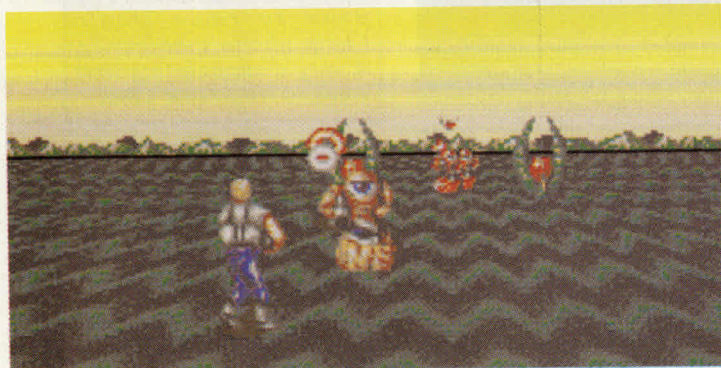
(Below) The two-player game is considerably more enjoyable, as it can be played either as a team or battling against each other. Of the two, the former is advisable, but the latter is much more fun.



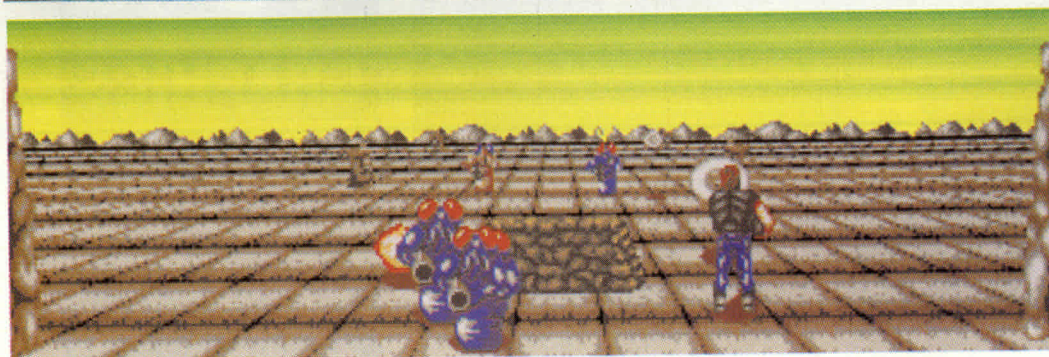
To boost your weapons' power, small red icons can be collected which double the power of the gun you are currently using. However, if you die, you lose the collected booster.



(Left) The enemy forces appear on the horizon and can be picked off individually with a well-aimed shot. Care must be taken, though, not to be on the receiving end of one of their long shots.



(Below) The walls and pillars that make up each planet's surface are useful hidey-holes when avoiding the enemy shots. However, if shot too often, they explode, literally blowing your cover!



OVERALL RATING

68%

STEVE

Obvious comparisons will be made to Space Harrier, but Bad Company offers more depth to its gameplay than the Sega coin-op. Whether or not this is a good thing, though, is another story. My first few goes were spent willing my character to fly so that the action would speed up a little, and the game seems a little plodding for an 'action-packed' shoot'em-up. I like the idea of being able to make use of the ground features to hide behind, and moving back to where I previously came from; but Bad Company should be faster.

DOUG

Space Harrier without the flying or excitement, just about sums up Bad Company. Logotron have added the extra weapons that appear in nearly every shoot'em-up nowadays, and a selection of different characters to choose from, but even with these features the game is totally boring. At first, the game looks as though it might be quite good, but unfortunately not. Not a game I would recommend.

GRAPHICS

Unlike the ST version, Steve Bak has used the entire screen, and the colourful graphics look all the better for the use of the border.

72%

NEW-LINE £19.95

ALADDIN'S MAGIC LAMP

Based on the age-old favourite kiddies' pantomime, Aladdin's Magic Lamp is a horizontally-scrolling shoot'em-up with you guiding your floating lamp through wave after wave of strange and deadly fruit, blobs and crystal balls. The story

behind the game tells of a failed attempt by an evil African magician who, whilst trying to steal the lamp from under the nose of the panto hero, was caught in the act and settled for kidnapping Aladdin's beautiful wife instead.

In response to this

abduction, Aladdin commands his loyal genie to make his way in the lamp to the magician's lair, and rescue her. However, to thwart the genie's plan of action, the magician has sent out groups of hostile objects to destroy the lamp once and for all; and if these objects come into contact with the lamp, one of the genie's five 'lives' will be lost. The lamp is controlled using the joystick and you are given the role of Aladdin as he sends directional orders to the genie inside. To protect himself from the evil beings, the genie can fire bolts of magic from the spout of the lamp, and successfully destroying a wave of baddies results in an enhancement icon which can be collected to improve your lamp's facilities. However, for every

ALEX

Aladdin's Magic Lamp is another to add to the long list of horizontal shoot 'em-ups, but it's up against stiff opposition. With its average graphics and weak spot sound effects, it just hasn't got a chance and is likely to get blown off the shelves by the likes of Blood Money. In fact the only thing going for it is its catchy theme tune - and that's not enough.

attack wave annihilated, a better icon will be offered, and from these, such add-ons as faster firepower, double firepower and rear guns can be added to your lamp. Finally, at the end of each stage, the magician has left a massive creature which is there to stop you passing to the next stage. Each creature fires large missiles or bolts at your lamp, and must be repeatedly shot in the mouth to destroy it.

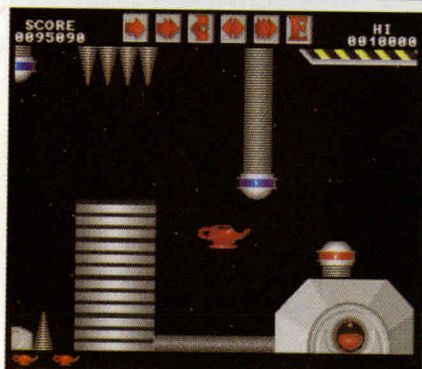
OVERALL RATING

52%

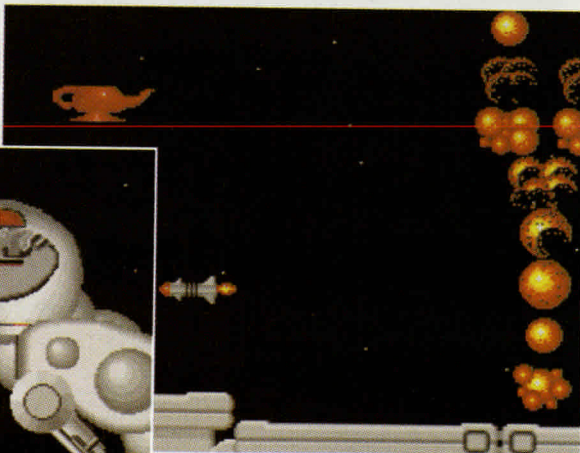
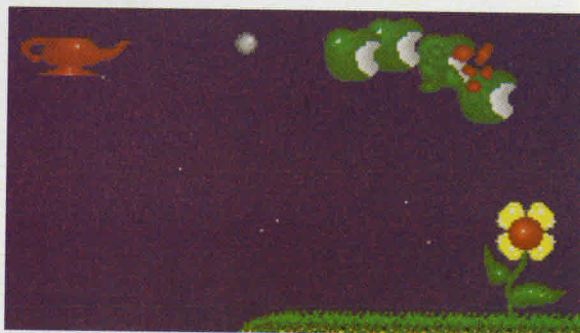
(Left & below) Your lamp begins its quest with a paltry laser, but when a wave of nasties is completely destroyed, an enhancement icon can be collected.



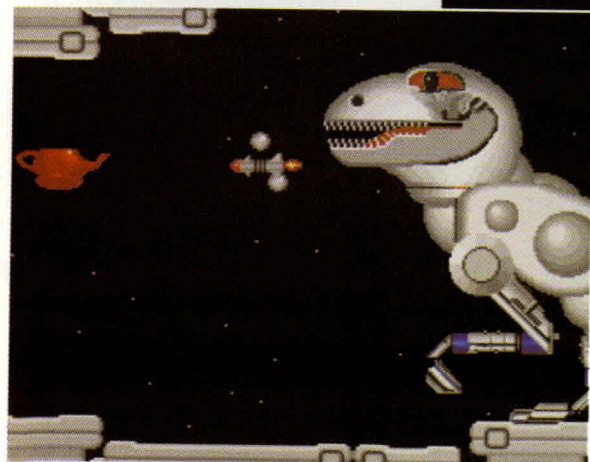
The attack waves are very strange to say the least, and are made up of various crystal balls, spaceships, and even deadly formations of fruit!



(Above) Contact with either the scenery or the aliens proves deadly to your ship, and a tinny noise will announce its destruction.



Before you can advance to the next stage, a huge end-of-level guardian must be destroyed. As you avoid their deadly missiles, you must shoot them in the mouth until they eventually explode.



STEVE

Compared with the likes of Blood Money, Denaris and R-Type, Aladdin's Magic Lamp is a very sub-standard shoot'em-up. From the word go, the game fails to inspire, and the repetitive and easy nature of the gameplay soon had me looking elsewhere for something to play. The icon collection system has been done to death, and nothing has been done to raise Magic Lamp above mediocrity. A very disappointing first release from New Line.

SOUND

A nice tune, but the supporting spot effects are weak and repetitive.

40%

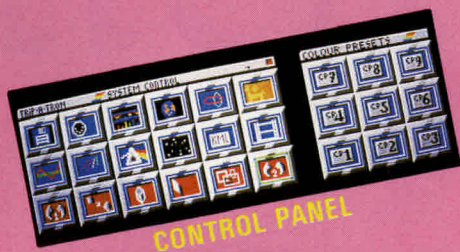
GRAPHICS

Colour is used quite well but, for the most part, the graphics are bland and uninspiring, giving the game an 8-bit feel.

43%

Trip-A-TRON

LIGHT SYNTHESISER



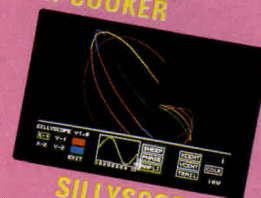
CONTROL PANEL



EVENT SEQUENCER



COLOUR COOKER



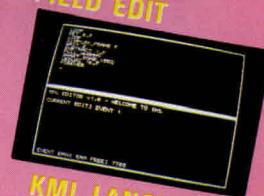
SILLYSCOPE



DISK ACCESS



STARFIELD EDIT



KML LANGUAGE

TRIP-A-TRON converts your AMIGA into an instrument on which you (and your mouse) can produce flowing patterns of light and iridescent colour, and match the display to any music.

THE RESULT is fascinating - pleasure enhanced by knowing that your sequences can be saved and enjoyed again or used as performance art at a disco or by a group.

SOON THE LIGHT-SYNTHESIST COULD BE UP THERE WITH THE GUITAR HEROES.

AMIGA TRIP-A-TRON with graphics effects allocated to most keys, is instantly useable. It also has its own programming language, KML, and beautifully designed pop-up screens, helping you create an infinity of unique effects.

TRIP-A-TRON comes with a comprehensive 145 page manual in an attractive A5 ring binder.

LLAMASOFT

Price - £29.95

LLAMASOFT 49 MOUNT PLEASANT TADLEY HANTS RG26 6BN TEL: 07356 4478

TRIP-A-TRON

What is a light synth? Mark 'Flash' Edwards wraps his mind around the peculiar pixels of Jeff Minter's Trip-a-Tron.

Video games are more frequently becoming long on hype and too short on originality, so it's refreshing to turn up something really different, and you can't get more different than Trip-a-Tron.

Trip-a-Tron is a 'light synthesiser', a kind of mouse-controlled pixelline firework display. It's not a game and it makes no sound. Quite simply, you use it to express feelings, just like playing a musical instrument, but

you actually create patterns in light, rather than make sounds. Just like a musical instrument, Trip-a-Tron offers an almost infinite number of possibilities - flip through the 134-page Filofax-bound manual, and you could easily be put off by the multitude of settings and more parameters than you could shake a stick at. There's even a programming language, called KML, built in to the system. You don't have to use it, but the possibilities it offers are endless.

Although this is very sophisticated, it is quite easy to dive in early and have fun without getting too involved. A range of

default settings and modes are supplied so that you can get into the swing and start the heavy job of customising whenever you're ready.

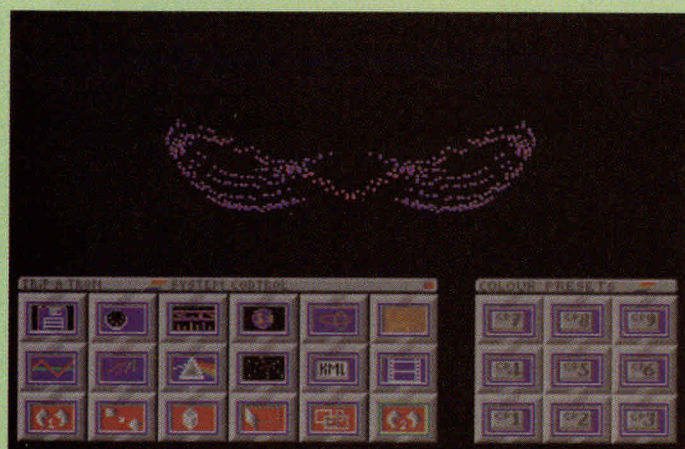
SPACED OUT

The Trip-a-Tron concept was created by that innovative survivor, Jeff Minter, one of the most hardy characters in the industry and, more interestingly, one of the most single-minded individualists in the home computer entertainment scene - nobody tells Minter what to do next.

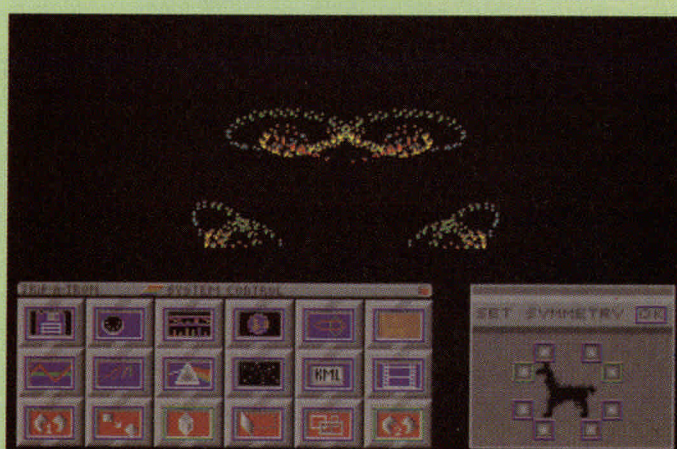
The light-synth idea has

developed over a period of a few years. It first appeared in a primitive form in the Commodore 64 title, Battalyx. Soon to follow was Psychedelia, then Colourspace which found its way on to both 8 and 16-bit Atari machines. ST owners waited for what seemed an eternity before the re-vamp, 'Colourspace 2', was ready, and when it finally arrived it was much more sophisticated than expected and was re-named Trip-a-Tron. Minter had tucked himself away for over a year and came up with what was effectively the result of his own personal project.

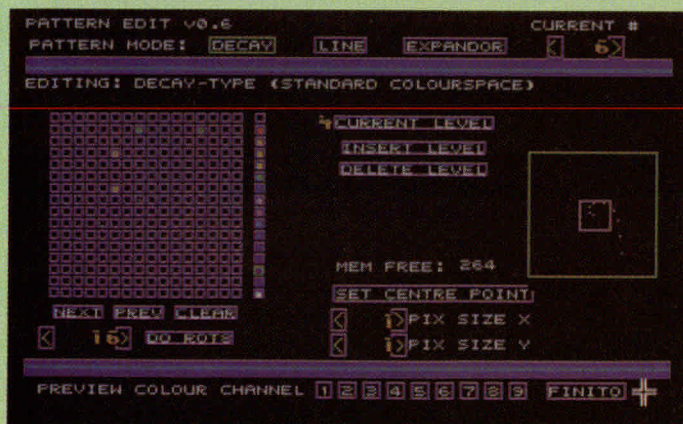
The Amiga version of Trip-a-



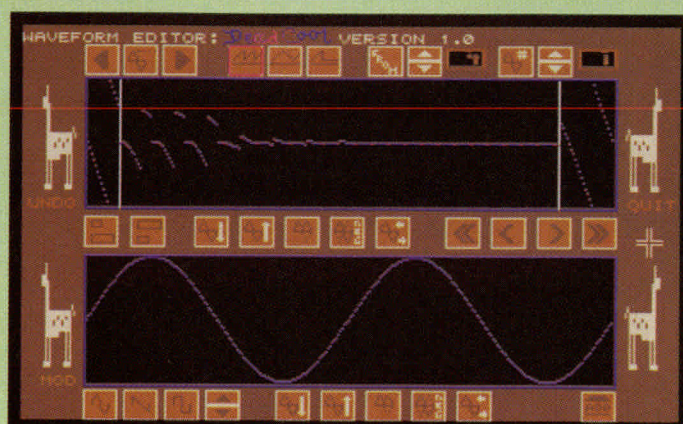
This master control panel gives access to all of the Trip-a-Tron control screens. The keypad group on the left-hand side allow you to switch between several predefined colour selections which are used to paint the lightform traces on the screen. It is possible to apply several colour selections simultaneously - colour palette multiplexing, phew!



The bottom row of icons allow you to set and control the symmetry modes. These cause the lightforms to be duplicated or echoed automatically. They can be 'mapped' on to the faces of an invisible cube, or any user-defined shape. The 'resize' editor allows the screen to be copied into several windows showing compressed versions of the whole work area.



Pattern mode / edit. The lightform 'cursor' is defined here. The pattern generation modes can consist of a pixel array or a line, with numerous settings to control how the pixels are generated, and what happens to them when they hit the screen (and that's before you move the mouse!)



This screen allows you to define a waveform by tweaking numerous parameters. These waveforms are used by other parts of Trip-a-Tron to control the way other effects turn out.

Tron was not actually produced by Minter himself; it was coded by Andrew Fowler of Video Images, presumably using much of Minter's original program code. The ST and Amiga versions are nearly identical, the Amiga version running a touch slower.

LIGHTWAVES

The whole light synth concept is based around colourful pixel 'traces' which flow around the screen under mouse control. These 'lightforms' can be edited to make different pixel patterns, animate, trace 'trails' of varying length, and so on. Basic lightforms can be changed in many ways, and once you start applying other Trip-a-Tron effects, such as symmetry and shape mapping, things start to get really wild; one flick of the mouse can cause a simple pixel trace to turn into a swirl of kaleidoscopic colour and motion.

You access Trip-a-Tron's many features through a pop-up control panel full of icons which hide a

multitude of weird and wonderful control screens, rather like a space ship's instrumentation panel. Settings can be saved for rapid recall during a Trip-a-Tron 'performance', but the most powerful way of 'playing' this instrument is to string together a series of instructions using the built-in KML programming language.

As well as creating visual effects interactively, you can load in IFF picture files which can be used as backdrops or may be processed using Trip-a-Tron's powerful video sequencer. This VSEQ can take a picture file and modify it in a number of special ways, thus creating a multi-frame animation sequence which can be replayed at any speed.

Jeff Minter has delivered many a fine Trip-a-Tron performance at various computer shows, and the concept was really put to the test with the production of 'Merak', a video album with visuals created entirely by several Minter-driven Trip-a-Trons running on a bunch of Atari STs synchronised together



Light-synth pioneer, Jeff Minter. One-time master blaster, mellows out with some 16-bit pixel power for creative Amiga owners.

using the MIDI facilities which are built in to the ST version.

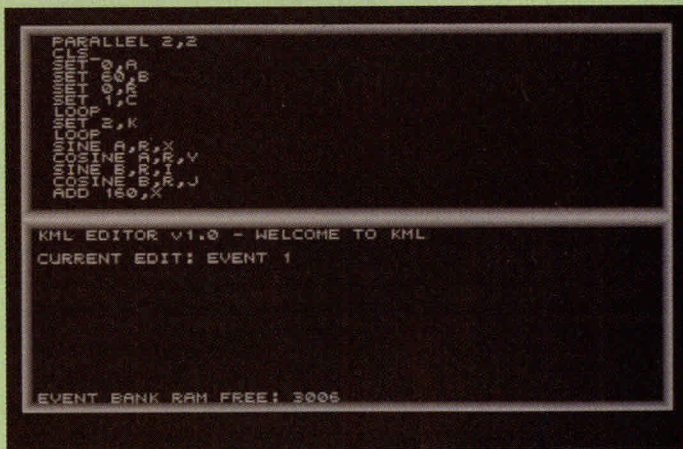
Trip-a-Tron is best used as a visual accompaniment to music; turn out the lights, grab your favourite CD, wind up the volume on your hi-fi, and start wiggling that mouse. The whole effect works best with certain types of music, and as you are frequently

reminded by the amusing little messages which pop up on various Trip-a-Tron screens. Pink Floyd makes for a mind-melting experience when you Trip the pixels fantastic. This is a truly awesome piece of software.

Trip-A-Tron is available from Llamasoft (07356 4478) priced £29.95.



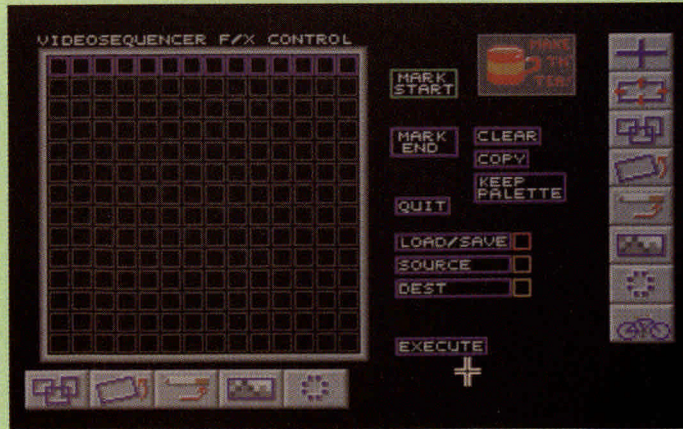
Now you can create your own 'flying through space' effects by changing just about every starfield control parameter you can imagine: how frequently the stars are generated; how many are produced; their velocity in any direction and much, much more.



This mini programming environment allows Trip-a-Tron control programs to be written thus giving direct control over just about every Trip-a-Tron function. Up to 128 KML programs can be loaded and ready to go at any one time.



KML programs can be 'tied' to any key on the Amiga's keyboard, thus allowing total customisation of your light synth. Hit a key, and a mini KML program is executed.



This is the video sequencer which needs at least 1Mb of RAM. This is basically a picture frame processor which can create full-screen animations by processing images and storing them in a multi-frame buffer. Effects include: pixellisation, filtering, texturing, 3D rotation, and more.

OCEAN £24.95

OPERATION THUNDERBOLT

The logical step when producing a sequel to the Uzi-toting Operation Wolf coin-op was to stick a second gun on the front of the cabinet, and that is exactly what Taito did. In addition, Operation Thunderbolt also featured alternate sections in which the screen scrolled towards you bringing the enemy with it, and the customary horizontally-scrolling

stages. Needless to say, with the extremely close conversion of Operation Wolf and several other Taito coin-ops under their belts, Ocean snapped up the rights to convert the sequel and, at long last, Roy Adams, the original game's hero, has returned to the Amiga.

On a routine flight from Paris to Boston, several innocent

passengers have been kidnapped and flown to the hijackers' native country of Kalubya. Soon after the snatch, the terrorists announced that, unless every imprisoned member of their revolutionary group was freed, they would kill their hostages one by one. Intelligence reports have located the whereabouts of their base, and following the success of the

Operation Wolf mission, Roy Adams has been deemed the only man capable of eliminating the menace and getting the hostages home safely. Adopting the role of the Uzi-toting hero, you can enlist a friend to take control of Roy's right-hand man, Hardy Jones, and must make your way through the eight stages that comprise the route to enemy



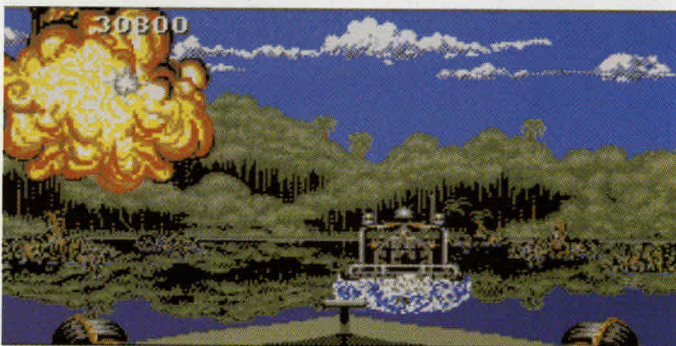
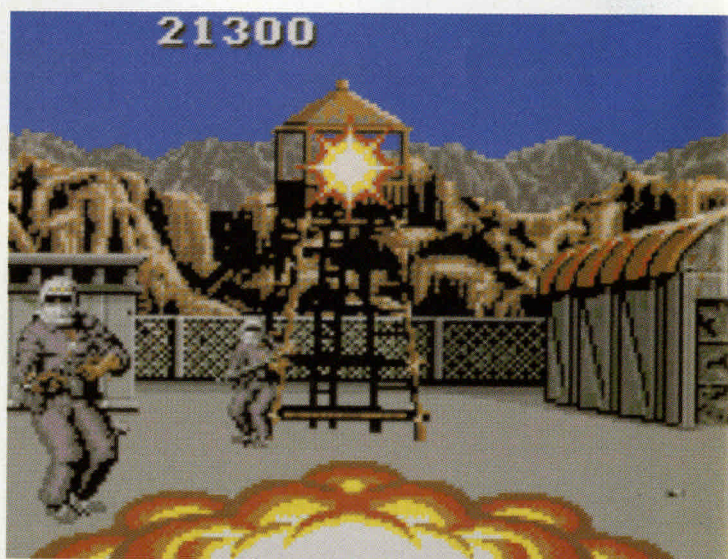
Beginning in a village on the outskirts of the enemy base, the screen scrolls towards you in third-person perspective, bringing with it hordes of armed soldiers and large vehicles, all of which fire everything they have at you. Your state of health, depicted as a bar below the main play area, is depleted with each shot that hits you.



The hostages have been locked up in ramshackle huts, which must have the locks shot off before they can go free. Be careful, though, not to accidentally shoot the people you are trying to rescue, as your game ends if they all die.



As well as shooting at you, the enemy soldiers hurl all manner of knives, grenades and rockets at you. Being on the receiving end of one, severely depletes your energy, but they can be deflected by a well-aimed bullet.



A repeated burst from your Uzi can destroy most things, but for the larger and deadlier vehicles, such as the tanks and helicopters, a grenade saves you both time and energy.



With ammunition supplies being limited, spraying the screen with bullets is not a particularly wise thing to do. In addition, accuracy is rewarded in the form of a bonus at the end of the stage.

GRAPHICS

All of the large sprites, explosions and attention to detail that made the coin-op so enjoyable have been retained. My only gripe is with the slightly jerky update during the 3D stages.

79%

base, killing any of the hostile forces that attack you along the way.

You begin your mission armed with the now-famous Uzi machinegun and a limited supply of bullets and grenades, making

SOUND

Excellent. Each level is preceded by digitised speech, and there are plenty of meaty explosions, screams and yells to please even the most bloodthirsty of soldiers.

85%

your way through a deserted city, picking off any enemy forces with your gun and grenades until you reach the undercover agent who will brief you on the next stage of your mission. The enemy forces attack on both foot and in vehicles

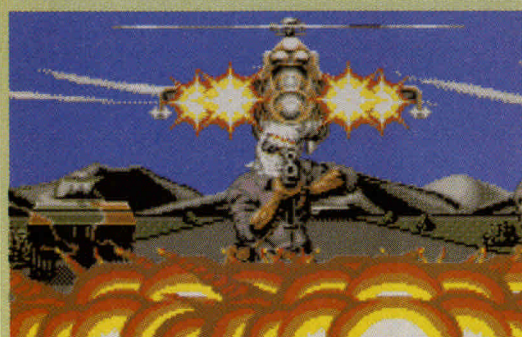
■ *One of the more essential items that Roy or Hardy can equip themselves with is the laser-guided sight. Once added to your gun, it makes aiming considerably easier and ensures a high hit percentage at the end of the stage.*

AMIGA ACTION

OVERALL RATING

81%

■ *(Right) Extra weapons or useful items, such as bullet-proof vests and health-replenishing drinks, can be added to your inventory by shooting one of the many crates that are dropped from the top of the screen, or by mercilessly shooting one of the animals that scurry across the screen. I was going to say something rude, but a watchful publisher stopped me!*



■ *Reaching the runway on level seven, you must blast your way through waves of jeeps, mine-dropping planes and hundreds of soldiers as you attempt to reach your only means of getting home: the hijacked plane. Once in, you must then carefully pick off the guerillas who attack you, whilst being careful not to hit any of the petrified hostages. Reach the end, and, in a scene similar to that of the original Operation Wolf, you must shoot the evil hijacker's leader who is holding the pilot at gun-point. Fail, and you'll never get home.*

STEVE

Despite some off-putting jerky scrolling during the 3D sections, Operation Thunderbolt is an almost spot-on conversion of the coin-op. The graphics and sound are identical to those of the coin-op, and the only difference is the slightly jerky movements of the, admittedly large, sprites. That said, Operation Thunderbolt is a very good, not to mention extremely playable, conversion, and fans of the coin-op and the first game should take a look.

ranging from tanks to helicopters, and both can be destroyed using your weapons, although it is wiser to save your grenades for the larger and deadlier vehicles. As your supplies start to run out, extra caches of weapons can be obtained by either shooting the crates that are dropped in by passing troops, or by shooting

one of the unfortunate animals that seem to produce the necessary goods when a bullet hits them! As well as extra weapons, useful items, such as a protective bullet-proof jacket and a laser-guided sight can be collected, and these make your task easier by saving health and bullets respectively.

As you progress through the various stages of the game, you will pass through villages and swamps, until you eventually reach the final showdown in the hijacked plane. Having made your way to the front of the plane, you will find the terrified pilot held at gun-point by the rebel leader. You must kill the fanatic before he panics and shoots the only means you have of getting home.

DOUG

When I first saw Operation Thunderbolt I was quite amazed at how close the conversion from the arcade was, with nearly all the graphics and sound incorporated. The game tends to be a bit hard because of not having a gun to point with, but as soon as you get the infra-red sight you can pick off the enemies with no problems. I can certainly recommend Operation Thunderbolt for a worthy purchase.

ALEX

After the brilliant conversion Ocean made of the original Operation Wolf, they have come up with another corker in the form of its successor, Operation Thunderbolt. The whole game is a big improvement over its predecessor, and when playing with a friend it improves the game no end. In a nutshell, Operation Thunderbolt deserves to be in anyone's collection, even if you only use it to vent your anger on some poor terrorist!

ARTRONIC £19.95

TAKE 'EM OUT

You are a soldier, and starting from the lowest rank of cadet you must prove your shooting skills to your instructor so that you can be promoted. Unfortunately, responsibility comes with rank, and as you progress with your skills, you will be sent to deal with various terrorist situations.

At first you will have to prove yourself at the target range. With two guns at your disposal, you take out any target that comes up, but don't go mad and waste your bullets because you only have a limited supply. If you succeed in this round you will then be sent to deal with your first gang of terrorists, but first you must choose your weapons. There are four different weapons to choose from, each with its own specifications. The two main weapons are the pump-action shotgun and the M16 assault rifle; at least one of these guns should be taken with you to

combat the various terrorists. A number of grenades and a bazooka are also available, and although you won't get as many shots as with the guns, the damage they do will make up for that. The bazooka causes a slightly larger explosion allowing you to kill more than one opponent, whereas the grenades will kill all terrorists on the screen at one time.

A selection of different aids will appear on the screen from time to time, and when shot, certain things can be gained, such as, extra ammo or medical supplies to cure your wounds. Hostages will appear at the window every so often, so care must be taken in case you shoot them.

GRAPHICS

Basic graphics that aren't that great and don't exactly wow you. Nothing special and not really what you expect to see on a 16-bit machine.

49%

SOUND

A few spot effects like guns firing and people shouting, with a small tune and some sampled speech; but apart from that, not a lot else.

48%

STEVE

In many respects, Take 'Em Out is very similar to Prohibition. The graphics and sound are, to totally contradict Doug, quite good, and I thought that they added a great deal to the game. Whilst static shots make the game seem bland and dull, actually playing it reveals a certain addictivity. However, due to the repetitive nature of the game, and an infinite supply of credits, the novelty of the game soon wears off, and I can't see myself returning to it that often.

DOUG

Take 'em Out is a very basic shooting game, and although it's quite good fun, the fun doesn't last that long. There are quite a selection of levels, but none of them take very long to complete and once the game is beaten, you just can't be bothered to have another go. I've seen better shooting games and I can't really recommend this one.

Starting as a cadet, you practise your shooting ability on the target range and, once you succeed, then it's on to the real thing; and unlike the targets, the terrorists shoot back.

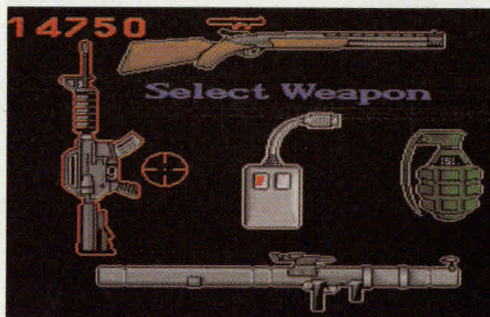


OVERALL RATING

50%

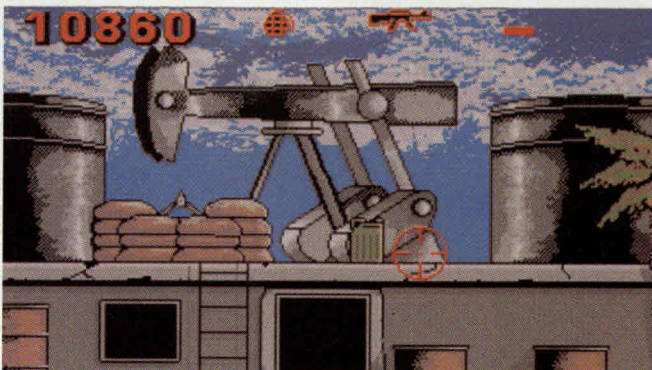


You successfully overcome the gang of terrorists, rescuing the group of hostages, so it's back to the range to keep your aim up to scratch; but this time it's clay-pigeon shooting.



Choose two of the four different weapons to use against the terrorists, but choose unwisely and life could be made very hard for you.

Getting your gun at the ready, you prepare to dispose of your first terrorist group. Terrorists pop up from all over the place and quick responses will be needed if you're to get off the first shot.



A fuel can appears on one of the walls, and if you wait until the right moment you can do quite a bit of damage. When you shoot the fuel it explodes, taking everything else with it.

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The choice of difficulty, type of race and your competitor's name has to be made before you can get out on the tarmac.



As with Grand Prix Circuit, there are several helpful options, including a choice of wheels. One of the three bikes has to be chosen, and they range from a puny 125cc to the mean 500cc bullet.

STEVE

The first thing that I noticed was that it was very similar to one of Accolade's other racing titles, Grand Prix Circuit. As with most games that are around now, a selection of worldwide tracks are included, so at least you don't have to race on the same track everytime you want to compete. The difficulty was set at a suitable level, and even if you didn't like it, you could change it to suit you. As racing games go, you could do a lot worse than try the Cycles.

ACCOLADE £24.99

THE CYCLES

Now that the computer games market has been absolutely flooded by a whole host of different racing games, Accolade have tried to separate from the rest of the pack and sneaked in with The Cycles in the hope of taking pole position. Instead of being based around a four-wheeled automobile, The Cycles is based around, yes, a

motorbike, but not your ordinary mo-ped, but none other than a powerful 500cc four-cylindered beastie with more power than a herd of horses! Not all racing games are realistic to say the least, but Accolade claim that The Cycles has true racing realism and allows you to sense the undeniable rush of full-throttle speed.

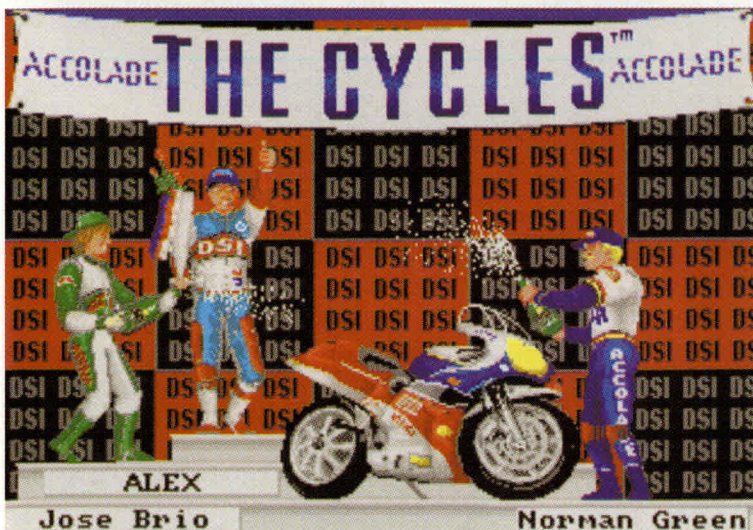
As the game opens, you have to select the difficulty level, ranging from a novice to the experienced pro. Practising the tracks plays an all-important part if you are to become victor over all of the other hungry glory-takers, so one of the options is to bring your skills of bike racing up to scratch on the desired course. A single race can be run if you, the competitor, so desire, or maybe a

complete Championship would be more to your liking, where it is possible to race on course all around the globe. Then a decision has to be made about which of the three bikes to choose from. With a 125cc, a 250cc and a mega 500cc bike to choose from, you can't say that you are not spoiled for choice. Before you are unleashed against the other riders in your heat, a qualifying time has to be made showing that you can actually hold your own.

I know you're thinking to yourself 'let me get on that track', and without further time wasting, you mount the metal monster and rev the engine, because a good start is essential. Using the joystick, it is possible to accelerate, brake and steer around bends. True to life, the

DOUG

Cycles is basically Accolade's previous title, Grand Prix Circuit, but on two wheels. The game seems to be similar in most ways to its four-wheel counterpart but just bike orientated. At first the controls take a bit of getting used to, but once you've had a bit of practice you can really get into the game. If you prefer bikes to cars, then this is the racing game for you



(Above & left) After avoiding what seems to be an endless supply of other riders, you near the finish and take the chequered flag. If you came first, second or third it is time to break open the champagne because you've got something to celebrate!

The Cycles gives you the chance to race on various courses throughout the world. With fifteen to choose from, you must be able to find the track that suits your style of riding.

CHOOSE YOUR TRACK

Japan

Australia

United States

Spain

Italy

West Germany

Austria

Yugoslavia

Holland

Belgium

France

England

Sweden

Czechoslovakia

Brazil

SELECT
INFO

whole bike leans over as you round the corner, but take care not to spin out otherwise the bike will have to be towed back to the pits. Depending on the difficulty level picked earlier, the gear change will either be automatic, or on harder levels, manual. After you have qualified, you will have to race on the same track, this time with other competitors. Beginning on the starting grid, you view from first-person perspective, and the other leather-clad competitors can be seen in front. The lights turn from red to green; you pull on the accelerator and race off; but whether you can stay on the track is a different matter altogether, because hairpin bends have to be negotiated at over a hundred miles an hour.

ALEX

I must say that I thought the sound effects were the strongest point of the game, but I found the rest to be weak. I wasn't really impressed with any specific part of the game, what I found was uninspiring for me. I didn't find myself coming back for more, which is what I think makes a good game. Basically, although this goes deeper into the realms of bike racing than Super Hang-On, it isn't as playable. Not a bad game at first, but I do question its lasting appeal.

SOUND

No soundtrack during game, but pleasant loading tune and realistic engine effects.

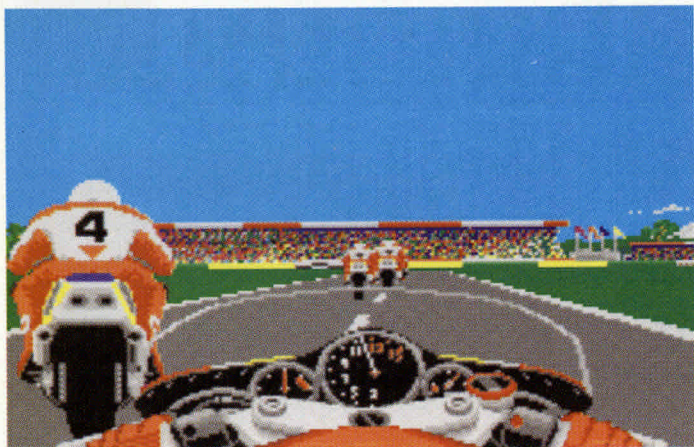
60%

GRAPHICS

Adequate graphics with large competitors moving smoothly on screen.

56%

With only a single man to get past to win, you lose your concentration for a moment and your front tyre hits his. It's the end of the race for both of you now.



SUZUKA CIRCUIT

LOCATION: Suzuka City, Japan
LENGTH: 3.695 miles
LAP RECORDS:

1.	(no name)	(no time)
2.	(no name)	(no time)
3.	(no name)	(no time)
4.	(no name)	(no time)

500 cc

64%

It is possible to get a close-up view of the track before you race on it, allowing you to choose which bike to ride.



Each circuit has its own qualifying time, and before you can race against the other competitors, you have to speed around an empty track to get the best time possible.



It's too late for pre-race nerves when on the starting grid, because I'm sure the other speed-thirsty drivers are not going to wait for you just because you have a case of butterflies!



Notwithstanding the need to avoid other riders, staying on the tarmac is essential, because straying from the track when nearing a bridge could that you and your bike being taken back to the pits in a paper bag!

ANCO £9.95

KICK OFF: EXTRA TIME

Anco's Kick Off was probably the biggest surprise hit of 1989. Released without any hype whatsoever, it proved itself to be one of the most playable football games ever, thanks to its realistic controls and features, and - more importantly - its fast and furious gameplay. However, a few critics felt that it could have had just a few more features. So, in reply to that criticism, Anco have released this expansion disk. To add the extra features, the Extra Time disk must be booted first and, after a while, you will be asked to insert your original Kick Off disk. After a brief load, and another disk swap, the enhanced game will be up and ready to play.

At first, there doesn't seem to be anything particularly different, but when the menu screen is accessed, a new set of options has been added, as well as a few minor additions to the existing ones. Entering this new sub-menu, then takes you into the list of changeable parameters, from which you can tinker with features, such as: the style of ball control; the choice of pitch surface (which range from wet and muddy to astro-turf); and the match length - although the forty-five-minutes-a-side option is now conspicuous by its absence, presumably because of complaints of broken joysticks and aching wrists. In addition,

STEVE

I can't help but feel a little disappointed with Extra Time. Anco's Kick Off is undoubtedly the best football simulation available, but I would have liked features, such as the off-side rule and the ability to change my team's strip, to have been added, as well as the neat wind and ball control options. In addition, when changing the pitch, it would have been nice to have it change graphically as well, as it tends to spoil the intended effect. A bit of an own-goal for Anco, I'm afraid, and definitely a missed opportunity.

there are a few new referees added to the existing line-up, but, unfortunately, Mr. Anco, the strictest ref in the business, is still there!

Please Note: You must own Kick Off itself to run Extra Time! Because of this, when

reviewing Extra Time we had to take this into consideration. Despite the fact that Kick Off is a superb game (an essential buy in fact) we do not feel that Extra Time adds enough to the original to warrant a high score.

GRAPHICS

Nothing here has changed, but despite the small sprites, the graphics are effective.

58%

SOUND

Once again, Extra Time doesn't affect this rating, and the whistles and cheers from the first game are still there.

53%

DOUG

I was introduced to the joys of Kick Off by Steve, and it was probably the best thing he ever did. The original game is fast and furious, and your game collection isn't complete without a copy. However, there were a few features I would have liked to see in the original game that were forgotten, and I saw Extra Time as a perfect opportunity to improve the almost perfect original. I expected defensive walls, the offside trap and other graphical thrills but, unfortunately, there don't seem to be that many added, and the extras that are there come over as a little disappointing. A great pity.

OVERALL RATING

62%



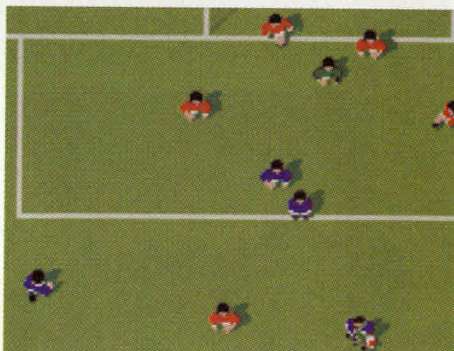
(Left) The main menu from which all of the changes are made. The new option that seemed to have the most effect on play was the wind control, which can be set from a gentle breeze to a force-ten gale!



At first, when the actual match begins, the changes you have made aren't noticeable, and it isn't until you boot the ball upfield and it keeps rolling, that you realise that choosing a hard surface was a mistake!



Instead of the normal 4-3-3 and 4-2-4 formations, Extra Time allows you to opt for the more daring Falcon and Blitz team positioning. Unlike the old ones, these formations take advantage of the nippy wingers, or allow you to concentrate on attack rather than defence.



If you thought that the refs in the first game were harsh - you ain't seen nothing yet! In Extra Time they penalise you heavily for even an accidental foul.



15

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■ With the aid of the map you decide which neighbouring town to ride to next. With a press of the button, our hero jumps on his horse and gallops off.



■ Once you have entered the village, running around and examining buildings reveals different people that have to be won over by you in order to raise an army.

UBISOFT £24.99

IRON LORD

In days of old, when knights were bold and computers weren't invented, men in armour clubbed each other to death or until their heads were dented! Iron Lord offers you the chance to take on the role of a gallant knight, and rescue the village townsfolk from the rule of your wicked uncle. The key to success in Iron Lord is to raise an army to defeat the evil horde, but this is easier said than done because most of the peasants are far from co-operative. Firstly, you decide to mount your sturdy steed, and gallop off towards a nearby town

to find out as much as you can about raising an army of your own. After a brief search of the winding streets, you stumble across an old herbalist who offers to heal your wounds for a measly sum of money. After you have had your miracle cure, rumours spread around town of an annual archery tournament.

Gathering your trusty longbow and quiver of arrows, you strut off

towards the competition in order to gain the prize. With the eye of a sharpshooter, you fire the arrow which thuds into the bullseye of the target - a few more of them and the trophy will be yours. Your next stop is the small village situated to the west of the river, but watch out for the shopkeeper because he will sell you anything for a ridiculously high price. You can also pay a visit to the inn, where you can gather information from drunkards whose tongues are loosened by too much alcohol. A windmill and monastery are situated nearby, and yet more tales of sorrow are heard when you decide to visit them. With only the city on the hill left, you dismount and venture through the crowded streets and into the town square. The city is far from welcoming, but if you keep yourself to yourself, you should be fine. The temptation of a nearby gambling hall proves irresistible and you enter with caution with your hand on your sword. The choice of arm-wrestling or a game of dice is yours, but either a lot of money or a lot of luck will need to be yours for you to come anywhere.

When you leave with your bag of winnings, though, you are confronted by an armour-clad knight, intent on destroying you

ALEX
My first impression of Iron Lord was that there was not a lot of content in the game, but after I had kept on at it, I found the game thoroughly enjoyable. The graphics and sound are good enough to complement the game's atmosphere, and there is sufficient variation in Iron Lord to hold your interest long enough to be able to defeat your uncle. Iron Lord is a game that deserves to be in anyone's collection; I know I'll be playing it for a few hours more.

and letting the corruption of evil spread and rule forever. Being a dab hand at swordplay, a few slashes of cold steel should show him who's boss. After a few trips back and forth to each village, you muster up an army, and although it may be ragged, you take refuge in the ruined castle. From the tower, you plan your next move and wait to give the order to attack and subsequently rule the realm, once and for all!

STEVE

After what seems an eternity, the great Iron Lord makes its way onto the Amiga. Iron Lord, for me, is just a souped-up version of Cinemaware's oldie, Defender of the Crown, but overall I enjoyed it more due to its increase in playability. Overall, Iron Lord is a must for the strategists amongst you, but I recommend it to anyone.

DOUG

Iron Lord is a very playable arcade-strategy game based in the medieval times. There is a good selection of arcade sequences to keep you interested, and they don't get in the way of the strategy element of the game. Interaction with the townsfolk will be needed if you are to build your army and overcome the forces of your evil uncle. If you think this game looks like another Defender of the Crown, don't worry, there's a lot more to this one.

SOUND

A suitable theme plays throughout which adds to the atmosphere, as well as spot sound effects at certain points.

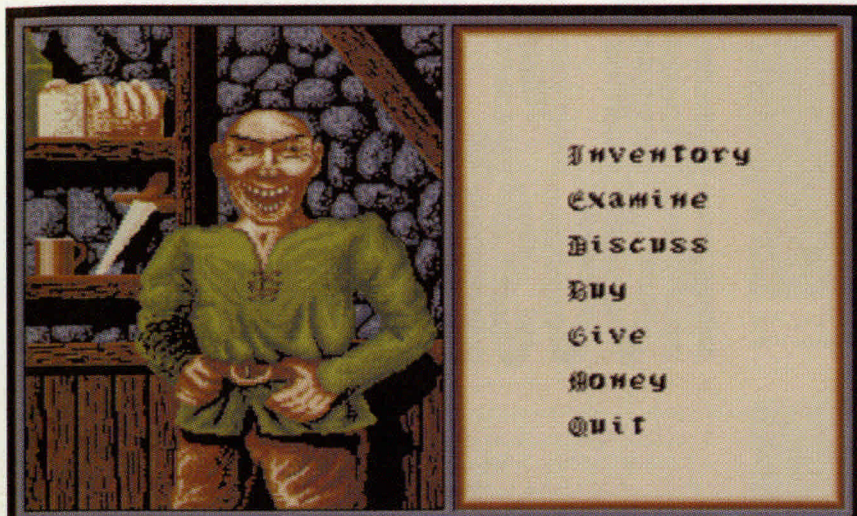
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GRAPHICS

A great variety of both still shots and animated sequences which both look good and complement the game.

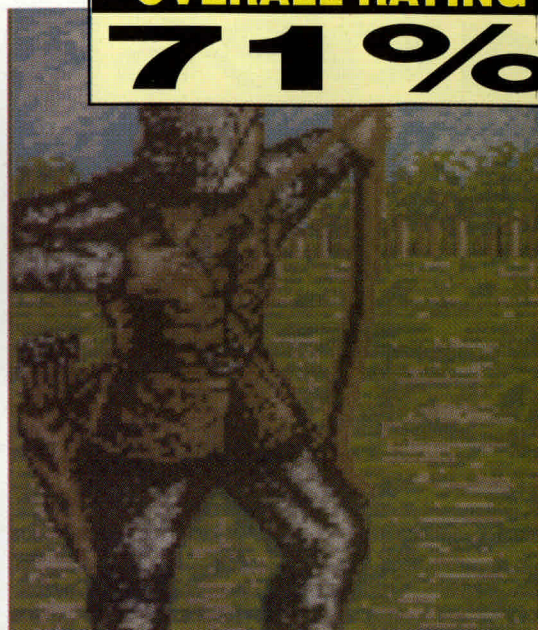
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■ Inside the hut on the edge of town, is a seedy little shop in which a shopkeeper attempts to con you. Don't believe what he says, because he is more evil than the army you have to defeat.

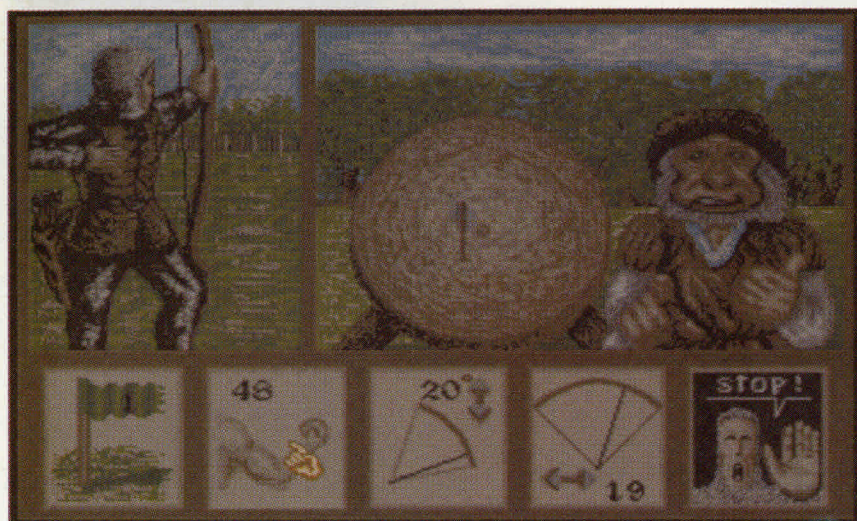


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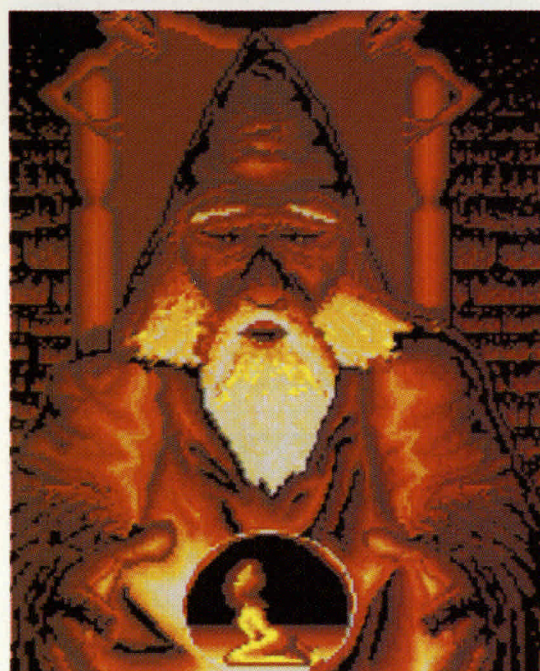
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■ (Above & left) When entering the archery competition, the angle, the direction and the power of the shot have to be judged correctly if your arrows are to sink into the bullseye. After you have taken your four shots, the points are awarded and it is on to the next round.



■ (Right & below right) A gambling hall takes your fancy and you enter with caution. Inside, a pompous man challenges you to a game of dice, and hoping that luck is on your side, you throw them and roll higher than your opponent. You quickly grab the winnings and sit down at another table, ready for an arm-wrestle. Joystick waggling is required here if you are to slam the other man's hand to the table.



■ Inside the forest, a wise old wizard can be found. After telling you of your quest and giving out other information, he bids you farewell and wishes you good luck.



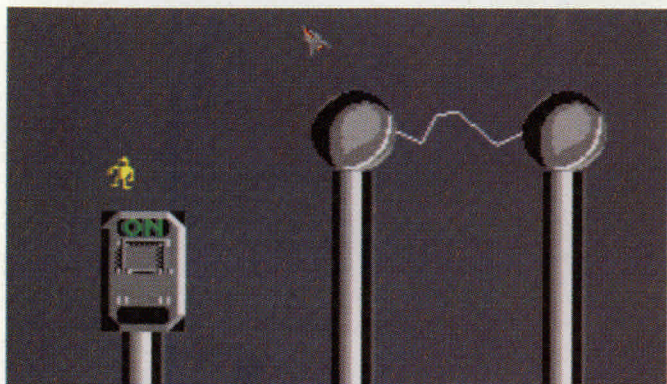
■ Once your army of peasants has been gathered, you seek time in which to plan the battle. From the tower, you can begin the war which will determine who will rule the land.

OVERALL RATING

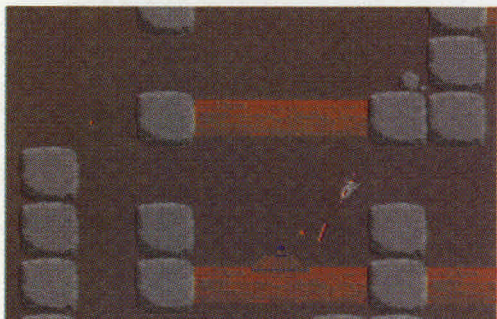
40%



■ A stranded pilot jumps up and down wildly, waving his hands to attract attention. Guiding your ship towards him you scoop the pilot up and use your thrusters to fly off.

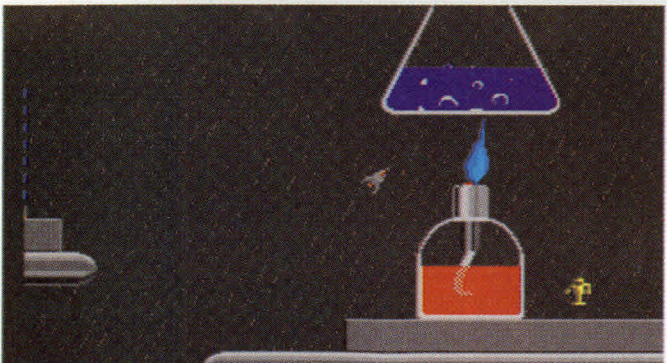
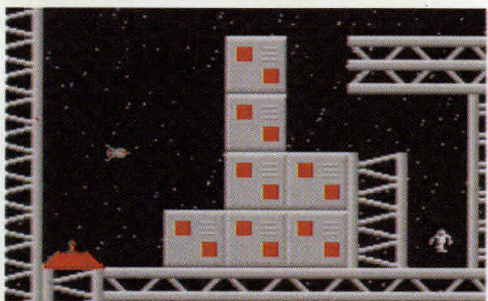


■ An electrical current stops you from going in between the two pillars to the right, but shooting the on-off switch a couple of times with your laser should solve that problem.



■ An alien bunker sprays bullets in all directions, making your task that little bit harder. Once you've got in close enough, press the fire button and let them have it.

■ After travelling through several dimensions with gravity that pulls you down, you arrive at a level with gravity that pulls you to the left. Believe it or not, this makes things very hard.



■ If Dr. Plummet had paid his electricity bill you wouldn't be having this problem, but for now you're just going to have to fly around this obstacle.

MICRO ILLUSIONS £24.95

DR PLUMMET'S HOUSE OF FLUX

Dr. Plummet was without a doubt a genius with radical ideas and totally new concepts, but as is so often the case when people cannot understand something, he and his theories were considered mad. But not all things thought his inventions stupid, and the aliens from outer space, being clever like all respectable aliens are, saw the potential of Plummet's ideas. Before long the little green aliens had come down to Earth in their little green ships and taken Dr. Plummet off to their little green planet. Suddenly, people wanted Plummet, and his ideas, but now it was too late. The Space Corp sent out their best pilots to capture Plummet, but none ever returned. Now it's your turn to find Plummet and supposedly bring him back to justice.

The only thing at your disposal is your space ship "Plummet's Progress", designed and constructed by Dr. Plummet himself. Your ship has been equipped with the latest Dr. Plummet's Patented Zoom King engines which are powerful enough to withstand even the greatest planets' gravitational pull, and some experimental Snuffer Buffer shields constructed by Dr. Plummet himself.

When you eventually arrive at the hideout of Dr. Plummet you will be guided into his House of Flux; a place where new dimensions not yet known to man have been created. Within these dimensions are the numerous pilots that were sent by the Space Corp to capture Plummet, but never came back.

You are the men's only hope, and at the same time you are the only pilot left to rescue Plummet. But can you make it through the 28 dimensions that lie ahead?

DOUG

When I first opened the box to Dr. Plummet's House Of Flux I was quite impressed by the presentation and the humorous background story enclosed, but my laughter soon turned to groans of despair when I saw the game itself. The game is very close to, Raider by Impressions, and probably just as bad. The only good thing about this game was the music and the free paper money inside the box.

STEVE

The jaunty intro tune and presentation of House of Flux makes the game out to be simple but fun. This is very misleading because, although the game is simple, it's hardly my idea of fun. The Gravitar/Thrust theme has been done before, and a lot better and a lot cheaper, too. The novel setting for the game sparked my interest initially, but the repetitive and dull gameplay soon killed it.

GRAPHICS

The graphics themselves aren't too bad, but though the backdrops vary, the actual layout of the levels are all the same, the obstructions just being moved around.

49%

SOUND

A really catchy piece of music on the title screen, but the sound effects during the game aren't as good and there isn't that much variety.

53%

Amiga Action 6

READER GALLERY

Here we are again at the gallery, with a new master at the helm. Yessiree Bob, it's me, Steve Merrett, at the controls now, and I hope you keep sending in pictures of the quality Whitey used to get. OK. So, send your Amiga pictures on disk, along with instructions of how to load it, and the name of your desired game to:

Steve Merrett, Readers Gallery, Amiga Action, Latham House, Quarry Lane, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 2NY



That man of many names, ADE, is back! Using DPaint III, he has drawn this neat picture of big Arnie as the Terminator. One thing that puzzles us, though: why does he look so sloppy!



(Left & below) Well, it certainly looks as if Arnie's Terminator character is flavour of the month. Drawn in DPaint III, it is probably the better of the two, thanks to the stronger detail and use of colour. This time, he has been transferred to pixels by Lee Barker. In addition, Lee also sent in this piccy of a strange, red android. What it is, or is called, though, I have absolutely no idea.



(Above, right & below) Using Photon Paint II, Richard D. Clades, from Hull, has sent in three piccys. The most impressive, is the rugged picture of one of the A-Wing fighters from the classic film, Star Wars. But also on show, was the Simple Minds logo from the Live in the City of Lights album, and the ever-popular Batman logo.

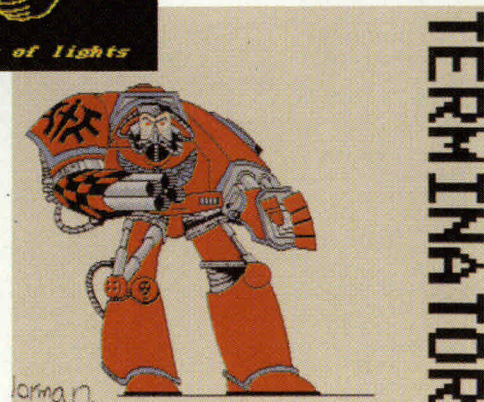
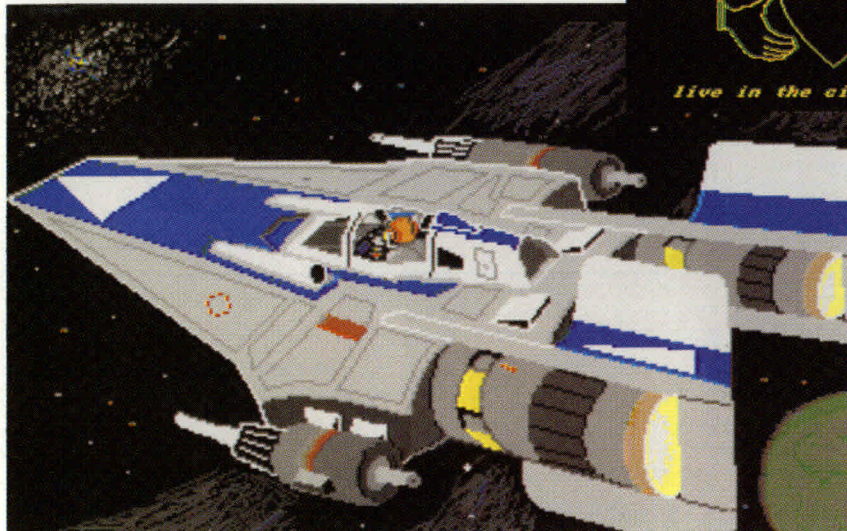


SIMPLE MINDS



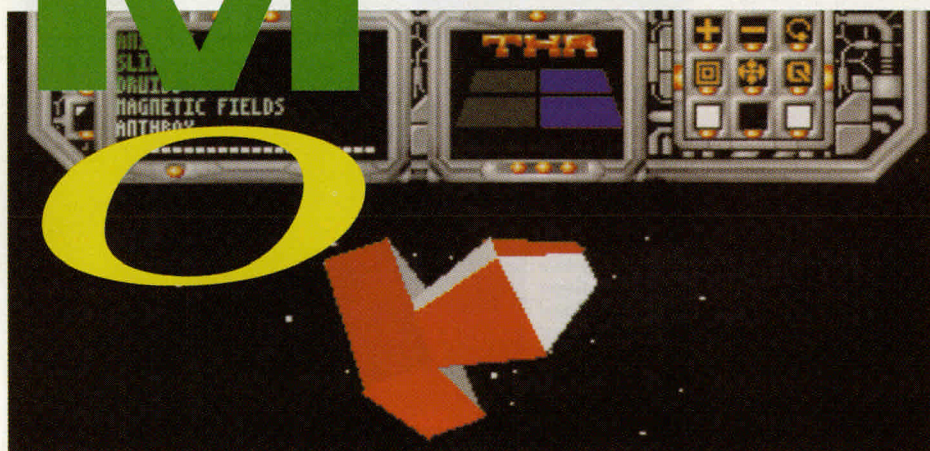
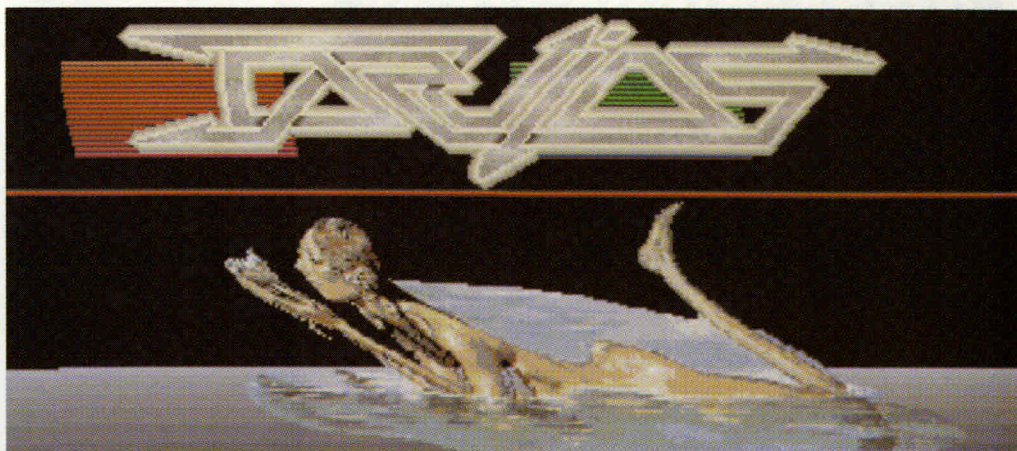
live in the city of lights

(Below) Just for a change, someone has sent in a picture of - yes, you've guessed it - the Terminator! Luckily, though, it isn't yet another piccy of big Arnie, but of a neat cartoon-style robot, sent in by Steven Bates, from Walsall. I wonder who'll be cloned next month!



Right, that's yer lot. Keep 'em coming, and the best piccy will win a prize. This month, the winner is Lee Barker, for his Terminator piccy.

DEMO

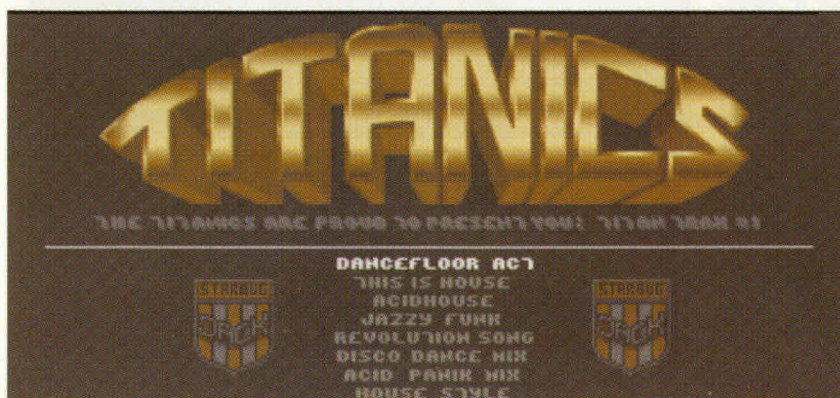


We begin our look at the demo scene with the Truffle Shuffle demo by the Mighty Druids. Not a lot to say about this, really. A nice bit of music plays, whilst a picture of a scantily-clad woman wibbles all over the screen. Still, it's quite nice to look at.

(Left) The Vector IV demo by the Hacking Relations shows off the team's neat vector routines, with a whole host of 3D objects rotating and bobbing as you view through a neat Starglider-style cockpit view-screen. As the various objects appear and are replaced by other shapes, a nice - if a little unoriginal - piece of music plays. Nice, but a little dull.



Argggggghh!!!! As if she didn't get everywhere already! I mean, you turn on the telly, she's there! You go into a record shop, and she's beaming at you from the walls. Who? Kylie bloody Minogue, that's who! In this two-disk affair, Australia's most popular (not here she ain't) export has been digitised and the piccys then appear and disappear as selected tracks, such as, 'I should be so yucky - sorry, lucky', 'The Locomotion' and, 'Especially for you', assault your ears. What's worse, though, is that the accompanying scrolly message does nothing but sing Miss Minogue's praises. One for Kylie fans only!



(Left) Ah, now this is better! For all you house music fans out there, and that includes moi, Titanic's music demo will offer much-needed relief after the Kylie demo! There are several tunes on offer, and each of them is superb. Well worth a look.

IMPRESSIONS £19.95

RENAISSANCE

Space Invaders must be the forefather of all arcade shoot 'em-ups, and many other software houses have attempted to bring the classic back into the running, but now Impression's offer you the chance to play on, not one, not two, but four of the classic arcade games from the past. The first of the four is *Invaders*, a faithful reproduction of *Space Invaders*. As with all of the titles on this compilation, they have two versions of each game: the classic version, and the contemporary version. The classic is taken straight from the old version, but the new version still keeps the addictive gameplay and it also hosts up-to-date graphics to increase the presentation of the game. Shooting everything that moves is the basic idea behind *Invaders*.

So no trouble with thick manuals here. Game two is

based on Atari's oldie, *Centipede*. *Megapede* is a basic game where the main aim of the game is to shoot the incoming centipede, each shot knocking off a single section of the centipede.

The third of four is *Draxians*, a *Galaxians* reproduction. The original hosted sprites that separated from the main pack and screamed down towards your ship, which all can be found in *Draxians*. Once again, a quick blast from the cannon should annihilate them, then it is on to the next wave. Basically, you have to exterminate wave after wave of these aliens as they come pouring out at you. Last, but not least, is *Asteroids*, or *Rokstorm* as it has been renamed. The content of the game still remains the same: destroy the asteroids before they destroy you.

STEVE

Whilst this compilation brought back pleasant memories of going on holiday to Devon and pumping my hard-earned into the various (then) hi-tech coin-ops, I was also in two minds as to whether to recommend it. The conversions are extremely close, and the updated versions are a nice extra, but they don't really possess any lasting appeal. However, for any veteran computer gamers who fancy a trip down memory lane, or just to keep the kids quiet, Renaissance may be worth a look.

GRAPHICS

Enhanced graphics on contemporary version, original graphics on each classic. Small but well-drawn sprites.

50%

SOUND

Poor variety of sound effects, with a single, weak theme tune during loading.

53%

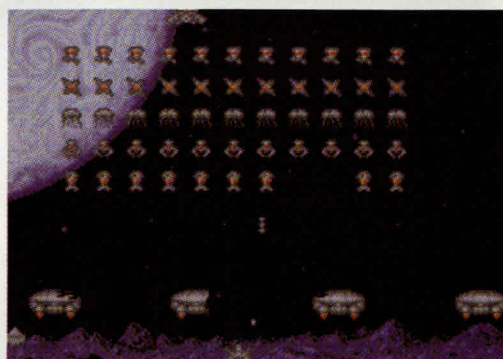
ALEX

I was in two minds about this Renaissance. It's great to see the good games of the past rereleased, but I'm afraid I don't find them as addictive as I did when they were first released. They have been faithfully recreated and still host all of the features that the originals did, and the new graphics are not to be laughed at, but that something that they used to have has been lost.

The golden oldie, *Space Invaders*, is the first on the compilation. The reproduction remains faithful even down to the mothership hovering above.

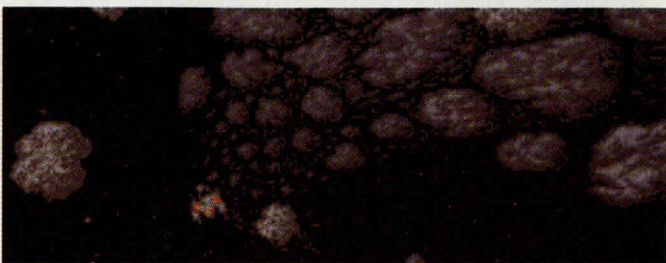


The contemporary version often hides extras. For example, *Space Invaders* includes land mines that destroy your ship, or aliens that drop from the sky and take one of your three lives.



A quick blast from the cannon as the centipede slithers across the screen is the way to destroy him; but watch out, he's got spiders working for him as well.

Either destroy the main pack of aliens or take out the ones sneaking down the side; either way you have to eliminate each wave if you are to be successful at *Draxians*.



(Above & right) The biggest difference between each version is the graphics, demonstrated by *Rokstorm*. The original features line graphics that fail to impress, but the later version hosts fully-coloured sprites that come racing towards you as if out of the latest shoot 'em-up.



OVERALL RATING

62%

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THE SEVEN GATES OF JAMBALA

Once again, a great hero is here to save the world, but not the world that we have come to know and love. Oh no, the fantasy wilderness is far from calm and free from danger. Evil monsters and creatures of chaos lurk within the labyrinths of

Jambala, and they don't take kindly to a stranger who comes along and thinks he can boss them around. Every move you, the hero of this fairytale adventure, take is greeted with anger, from both psychopathic creatures and a somewhat cruel mother nature. Five lives are at

your disposal, and each of those five lives is divided into yet another five, so in effect, our hero has twenty-five lives. Everytime he is unfortunate enough to bump into a monster, one of his sub-lives will be lost, and once five have gone a whole life will be lost. If, on the other hand, you are careless enough to stroll into a puddle of murky water, one of your full five lives will disappear, therefore lowering your chances of victory.

The game is divided into seven levels, each level being split into seven caves. Whilst guiding your hero around the labyrinth of tunnels, you have to search for one heck of a mean dude, otherwise known as the end-of-level guardian. If you manage to defeat the loathsome creature in mortal combat, a single part of the sacred wand

STEVE

From the very beginning, I'm afraid that The Seven Gates of Jambala failed to capture my interest. The graphics are OK, but the dull hues make the game seem bland and lifeless. In addition, the slow pace at which the game plays makes it unexciting to play. In a nutshell, Jambala is a nice idea, let down by dull gameplay and presentation.

will be yours, and there will be only another six levels to go before the gates of Jambala can finally be opened and you can make good your escape.

GRAPHICS

Most of the colours are shades of dull green, with the odd purple here and there. The graphics are uninspiring and fail to impress.

46%

SOUND

A pleasant tune plays throughout the action, with spot sound effects that are somewhat weak.

50%

OVERALL RATING

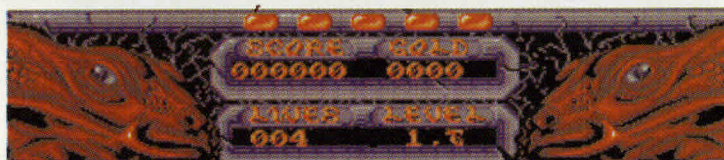
53%



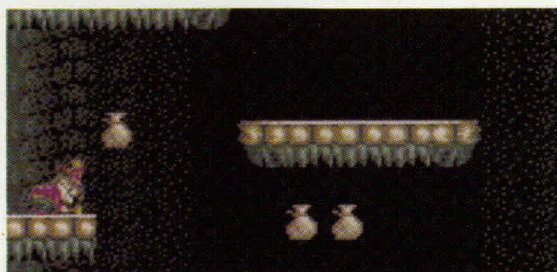
■ At the beginning of the game, the decision on which door to take is yours. But before you can venture into the maze of dank, underground tunnels, the key must be found to unlock the door.



■ (Above & below) Throughout each of the seven levels are doors, behind which you know not what. Here, a masterful monster hopes to sell you one of his many items, but also a tower can be found which, once you have climbed to the top, will take you to the next level.



■ Once inside the level, avoiding mother nature's cruel tricks is essential. For instance, if you slip into the pool of purple gunk, the hero will hold his nose and get sucked under.



■ Bonuses are usually left behind after you have terminated a creature, and if the hammer is found, gold can be found by hitting the ground with it.



■ At the end of each level is a monster that holds one of the seven parts to the magic wand. Destroy him and the segment is yours.



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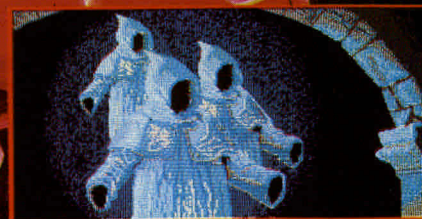
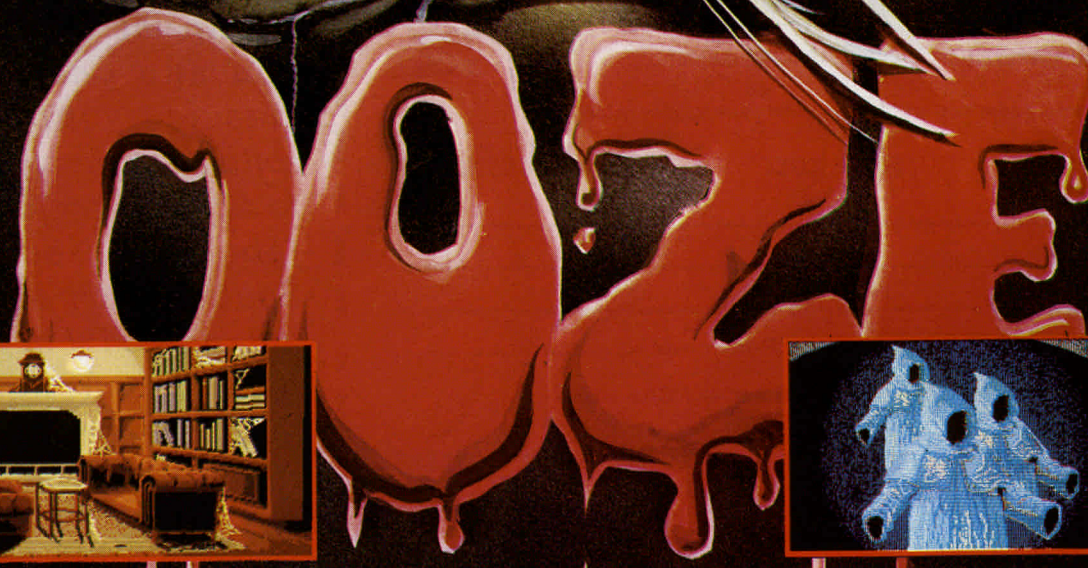
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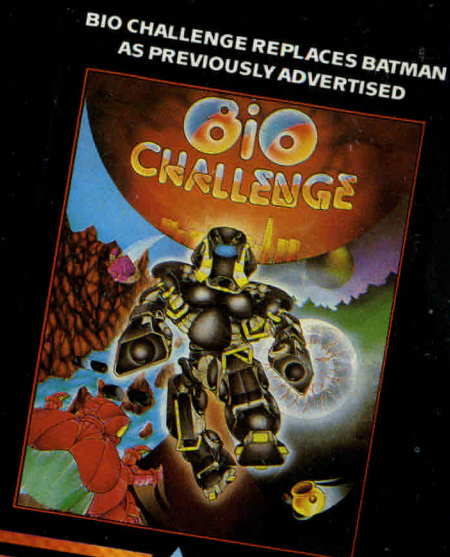
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